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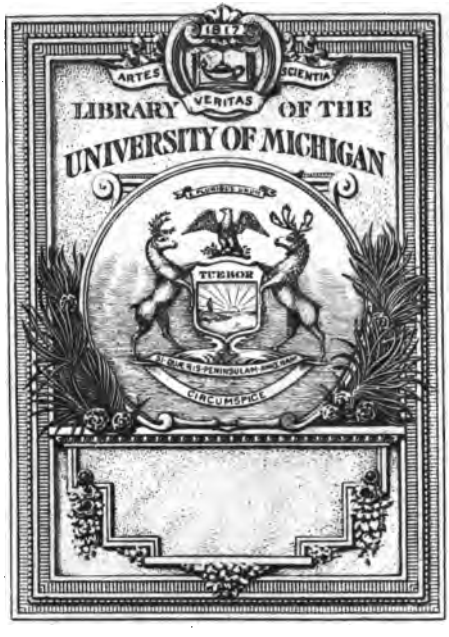
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THE

LIFE

OF

HANNAH MORE.

WITH

A Critical Review

OF HER

WRITINGS.

By the Rev. Sir Archibald Mac Sarcasm, Bart., pseud.

" If there's a sin more deeply black than others,
" Distinguish'd from the list of common crimes,
" A legion in itself, and doubly dear
" To the dark Prince of Hell, it is—Hypocrisy."

H. MORE'S PERCY.

Oh! the curst ungodliness of zeal. YOUNG.

Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. ROM. xvi. 17.

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PREFACE.

IMPELLED by the curiosity natural to the mind of man, I have diverted myself in reading the pamphlets, that rose like mushrooms, on the theatre of the Blagdon war, during the last two years.— This amusement has been strongly recommended to me by the faculty, having received benefit from the waters; for my constitution has sustained much injury in the wars of all sorts, and with all weapons, the pen, words, and the sword, in all climates, among all nations, people, kindreds, and languages, in which I myself, as well as my ancestors, for at least five thousand years, have, with various success, been engaged.

In this atrabilarious contest, the blood that has been shed is of the blackest kind, and indicates great rancour, melancholy, spleen, malice, hatred, and revenge, with a total absence of the milk of human kindness, love, forgiveness, charity, and a mutual

MM

desire of peace. The powers at war all profess to contend for order and an established religion, yet I have never heard that they have at any time publicly in the churches put up a prayer, or set apart a day for humiliation and fasting, for a restoration of tranquility. It is not to be supposed but that from the particular attention I have paid, in my perusal of the rescripts and manifestos of the parties at war, and which employment, I own, has expedited my recovery in some degree, so far as to be able to walk abroad again, and, like the Swiss, shew myself ready for the service of the poorest as well as the richest exchequer, I must have discovered the true cause of, and which was the aggressor in, this already too long protracted warfare.

Her Holiness, the elect Queen of the Non-descripts, having subsidized a considerable number of troops, already arrived and come to action, from the territories of the Princes CLAMOR, RIXA, JOCI, MENDACIA, FURTA, CACHINNI, *contrary to all the laws of all nations in dialectical wars, against the descendant of Cadwalladar, who has been basely deserted by all the neighbouring Princes, excepting Ap Gwyr, and Ap Styffnig; recollecting the good understanding and friendship subsisting between the houses of these renowned Princes and the Chief of the most ancient house of the Mac Sarcasms, I have determined, without further manifesto, to join, with my whole force, to bring on a general action with her* HOLINESS, *to*

fight, not " μαχοιτο ταρσοις," *but gladiis comminus, i. e. in plain English, not "on our tiptoes," but foot to foot, sword to sword, hand to hand, with fixed bayonets, and so put an end to the further effusion of atramentuous blood, for which worthy action I hope to receive the thanks of all friends to order, subordination, regular government, hierarchy in the church, and royalty in the state; for having perused the archives of my dynasty, for above five thousand years back, I have discovered my family has been invariably attached to these principles, and that, from the beginning, government has almost always consisted of* KING *and* PRIEST.

Dropping, however, all metaphor and allusion, I thought it reasonable and expedient to enquire into the real merit of the parties at difference; and considering that as the name of H. More has made some noise in this country, to read her works attentively, and according to the just rules of criticism endeavour to appreciate her talents and genius as a literary person, and her true, genuine, mental character as a woman. This, I myself am of opinion, I have done; and in this small volume compressed more than all the learning contained in Mrs. More's works, consisting of eight, and, therefore, have saved the reader much labour and expence in winnowing a little wheat from much chaff.

Ample specimens of her Poetry and Prose are presented to the reader, the most creditable to the author I could find; her doctrines, principles and

practices, as far as they could be collected from her own works, and her controversies with others, are pointed out, examined, and approved or condemned. "Where much is given, and arrogated, much is required." Let not my reader be prejudiced; if he will read, he will meet with the beauties as well as the deformities of the fair one: and if the judicious and discriminating reader shall be disappointed in the opinion he had formed of the lady's excellencies, and "high-toned morality," or the justice and judiciousness of the criticism, let him remember it is not the first time he has been deceived in his expectation of the excellence and the judgment of mankind. It will certainly serve to make Mrs. More better known than she has hitherto been, and to demonstrate the practicability of factitious, for a number of years, usurping the seat of genuine excellence; and to ascertain whether she has or has not been, according to the waggish Peter, "a bit of an impostor."

The principal actions of her life, viz. her secret calumnies of Mrs. Yearsley, her quarrel with her and Mrs. Cowley, and her literary larceny from each; together with a brief narrative of the grand transaction of her history—the Blagdon holy war—are noticed. The words Blagdon war occur oftener than I could wish; but as the event of that struggle against a powerful faction affects the interest of not only all the regular Clergy of the empire, but also of the people at large, it is hoped this inevitable circumstance will be excused.

As to myself, I confess I am disappointed with respect to the motive, object, and mode of prosecuting the war. The Curate has certainly made out his case, as admitted by herself and her advocate, who has thrown up his brief. He has fully proved, by a variety of evidence, the extravagancies of her Teacher, which were countenanced by herself; and the pleasure she seemed to enjoy from the impious adulation of her disciples, in the effusion of their extemporaneous prayers.—On the other hand, her transmitting "secret accusations" of the most serious nature to the Bishop is proved by Dr. Crossman's letter, *the* Bishop's mandate, notice to quit, *Drewitt, her disciple, his personal attendance to take possession and to do duty as licensed Curate of Blagdon, is proved by all the evidence the human mind is capable of considering, and which nothing less than the utmost depravity will ever contradict. Of all this she stands convicted, yet continues contumaciously mute, ashamed to put in any defence; but privately directs anonymous publications!*

As the doctrine of the Trinity, and the Athanasian creed are known to have been two of the articles of accusation, I was in hopes the public would have been much edified by the Polemics mutually bringing forward, in a new dress, all the old arguments, pro and con, with some new matter; and that they would have proved their thesis mathematically, as well as by scripture: but these topics, to the great

disappointment and loss of the learned, have not yet undergone the least discussion.

I had almost forgot, and I think it material to observe, that it is not decorous, advantageous, nor creditable for the established church to be without a Knight in the number of her defenders, whilst her HOLINESS, *the Non-descript Queen, has a very respectable Baronet as her advocate and counsellor, a man well skilled in the sophistry of dispute, and "decomposition" of evidence and argument. It is for this reason I thought it incumbent on me to bring my troops into action, with the hopes of speedily effecting a restoration of peace: but, if this object, so desirable to the whole country, and especially to the contending parties, should, unhappily, not be accomplished, and war shall still continue, to add to the curses entailed on man, I have to request, that the Ministers and Secretaries of State to her* HOLINESS, *who may have occasion to introduce my name, will have the goodness to write it at full length, thus—*SIR ARCHIBALD MAC SARCASM, *and not* SIR A. *lest on account of a sort of prosthetical alliteration my name should be confounded with that of my brother* SIR ABRAHAM ELTON, Bart.

ARCHIBALD MAC SARCASM.

A

REVIEW

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

H. MORE.

HANNAH, daughter of Jacob More and Mary his wife, was born at the Fish-Ponds, in the parish of Stapleton, in the county of Glocester, and baptized 17th Feb. 1744, as appears by the register of that parish. Her father, who had previously been a domestic in the service of Norborne Berkeley, Esq. of Stoke-House, Glocestershire, and had married his fellow-servant, Hannah's mother, was by his master's interest, appointed teacher of the charity-school at the Fish-Ponds, with a salary of 25l. a year, for the instruction of twenty poor boys and ten girls, where all his own children, five daughters still living, and one son since dead, were born, and received their education. At an early age Hannah shewed some signs of genius and great application, having more than the sex's usual share of curiosity to spur her on. Whatever books came within her reach she shewed an eagerness to peruse, and of those she thought valuable in catalogues she made a list and endeavoured to procure them. Nothing, however, was observed very re-

markable about her, excepting a keen, penetrating look, an ambition to shine in some companies, by making a parade of her reading, and a watchful taciturnity in others. That degree of prudence allied to cunning, which has since so much distinguished her, began early to characterize her mind; and she seemed rather formed for, and inclined to, a more desultory life than that she has led the last thirty years.

About the age of fifteen she began to dabble in poetry, and some ordinary verses on the 14th of February were her first essays.

"Now all nature seemed in Love,
"And birds had drawn their Valentine."

Hannah was a brunette rather than black; but her eyes were deeply black, keen, penetrating, and perpetually wandering and rolling, as if eager to seize on and comprehend the minds and persons of all present. From valentines she advanced to songs, and though she had no voice was ambitious to be thought a singer. What boarding school education, if any, she had, I have not been able to learn; but from her father's contracted circumstances, that probably was not a long time.—She was, however, industrious, and contrived to learn some French and a little Latin. In short, Miss H. More, by her laudable smattering in every study, was now spoken of in her own neighbourhood as an accomplished young lady who knew every thing.

Their father now removed to Stoney-Hill, Bristol, where he still carried on the business of a school, and his girls opened a day school in Trinity-Street. Here our heroine began, on account

of her black rolling eyes, and her little pieces of poetry, to be noticed; and by the produce of a subscription, among the charitable people of the wealthy city of Bristol, on which occasion Dr. Stonehouse was, I believe, very useful, they were enabled to open a boarding school for young ladies in Park-Street.

In this improving situation of their affairs, the five sisters, according to their several abilities, contributed to the general interest; one assuming the title of GOVERNESS, moderated the general concern, one marketed, one superintended the refectory part, and the others, with proper masters, taught the young ladies the usual routine of boarding school education. The scholars multiplied in a few years; and some small publication of minor poetry tended to advertise the school. Like most young women, the Misses More, and particularly Miss Hannah, were much addicted to attendance at the Theatre; and their scholars often accompanied them. It was thus Hannah conceived the idea of her being competent for dramatic writing, and at a loss for a subject, undertook to travestie the sacred stories. As, however, her poems are printed without any regard to the date of composition, I will, in my remarks, observe the order of the volumes.

Her first volume begins with detached little poems, of but very inferior merit. The verse is of the Hudibrastic measure, not difficult to write, and of the poetry may be pronounced what Dr. Johnson said of Fingal, when asked if he thought there were in the present age any author capable

of writing such a work, " Yes, many men, many women and many children." That she has read a great variety of books cannot be denied, and from these she has picked and culled whatever suited her purpose, and cast it into verse of easy construction; but there is no poetry. In a preface, written within these three years, to the last impression of her works, and not improbably the last that will ever be worked of them, she herself acknowledges, that she does not presume to hope that she " has added to the mass of general know- " ledge, by one original idea; or to the stock of " virtue, by one original sentiment. To what is " called learning she never had pretensions. Life " and manners have been the objects of her un- " wearied observation; and every kind of study " and habit has more or less recommended itself " to her mind, as it has had more or less reference " to these objects." But she was young and ambitious, and write she must.

" Morning from noon, there was no knowing,
" There was such fluttering, chuckling, crowing:
" Each forward bird must thrust his head in,
" And not a cock, but wou'd be treading.
" Yet tender was this hen so fair,
" And hatch'd more chicks than she cou'd rear."

She wrote one or more novels, of which one of her sisters passed as the author.

" A foolish foster-father-mother."

By reason of her sex, and on account of her circumstances, and perhaps friendship, the fastidiousness of criticism was mitigated, and she was encouraged by Reviewers. The itch for writing was

incurable; and she became literally a book maker. The first piece worthy of notice is the "BAS BLUE:" or "Blue-Stockings," a short poem on "Conversation." There was a club called by that name, consisting of ladies of a literary turn of mind, some of whom were persons of rank, talents, and respectable for their character, who met at Mrs. Vesey's and other houses, for the purpose of conversation only, cards not being allowed. She thus sings the praise of conversation:

"Enlighten'd spirits! you, who know
"What charms from polish'd converse flow,
"Speak, for you can, the pure delight
"When kindling sympathies unite;
"When correspondent tastes impart
"Communion sweet from heart to heart.
"In taste, in learning, wit, or science,
"Still kindled souls demand alliance."

In such poetry the praises of Mrs. Vesey and others are sung; and Aspasia, Alcibiades, Maro, Cæsar, and other names of antiquity, mentioned to make a shew.

BONNER'S GHOST is made to appear to a modern protestant Bishop, who was pruning a walk through a thicket to a chair which belonged to the popish Bishop. It is a proof of liberality, real or affected. She, however, as she goes on ridicules mystical creeds. Altogether it is a poor thing.

With a dedication to the Hon. Horace Walpole, afterwards Earl of Orford, a poem, entitled FLORIO, in two parts, next presents itself. In the character of Florio, which is far from well drawn, liberality in philosophy and religious charity are attempted

to be ridiculed. That philosophy enlargeth the capacity, and extendeth the knowledge of man, we all know, for philosophy or reason is what distinguisheth him from the brute; and where charity does not exist there can be no religion. But taking the subject on her own statement of it, let my reader judge which system seems most friendly to man, and worthy of the attributes of the deity, that which inculcates annihilation (a doctrine I abhor) or that which teaches that God is glorified by having from eternity predestined 999,999 souls in a million to torments without end. True philosophy, however, and the gospel present no such picture of the divine attributes. The character of Florio is made contemptible, and that of Bellario wicked, with the evident purpose of discrediting philosophy. In the poetry there is little passion or tenderness. It seems to be all her own, with but little friendly embellishment. She talks of love like a Dutch woman, as if she had never felt it; though at one period of her life nature was very sportive with her, and drove her to write at least valentines. In her, love seems to be only artfulness and cunning, and tenderness only selfishness.

If Hannah More has information and genius, (and that these are but factitious, I think will presently appear) she has not used either when choosing her theological system. Her divinity is indeed not calculated to increase our admiration of the divine perfections, or improve and enlarge our charity to man. In all she says on that subject there is a Jesuitical mystery.

Let me here select some passages, as a specimen of her poetry and sentiments, for the gratification of my reader, who will probably not choose to be at the expence of 2l. 2s. for eight volumes of inanity, much chaff and little wheat. In the following extract there is a false rhyme, "*known* & *town*."

"And pleasure was so coy a prude,
"She fled the more, the more pursued;
"Or if, o'ertaken and caress'd,
"He loath'd and left her when possess'd.
"But Florio knew the World; that science
"Sets sense and learning at defiance;
"He thought the World to him was *known*,
"Whereas he only knew the *Town*;
"In men this blunder still you find,
"All think their little set—Mankind."

ANOTHER.

"This good and venerable knight
"One daughter had, his soul's delight:
"For face, no mortal cou'd resist her,
"She smil'd like Hebe's youngest sister:
"Her life, as lovely as her face,
"Each duty mark'd with every grace;
"Her native sense improv'd by reading,
"Her native sweetness by good-breeding:
"She had perus'd each choicer sage
"On ancient date, or later age;
"But her best knowledge still she found
"On sacred, not on classic ground;
"'Twas thence her noblest stores she drew,
"And well she practis'd what she knew.
"Led by Simplicity divine,
"She pleas'd, and never tried to shine;
"She gave to chance each unschool'd feature,
"And left her cause to Sense and Nature."

As it is the object of these sheets to narrate some of the actions, as well as to make some remarks on the writings of Mrs. More, it will not, I conceive, be unacceptable to the reader, and it will be doing justice to the world, now that her controversy with the Curate of Blagdon is still raging, and while his friends, the clergy of the church, by her secret manœuvres are defamed by her and her co-adjutors, to contrast the sentiment in the last quoted passage, by inserting one from the "Controversy."

"Thus, Mrs. H. More refuses to the Curate of Blagdon, "contrary to every principle of equity, to every rule of jus- "tice, what the laws of the land never denies to any cul- "prit, to the most atrocious felon, to the most detestable "traitor; namely, a copy of the charge, and a list of the "witnesses. Yes, H. More, not *openly* but *covertly*, ac- "cuses a regular bred clergyman of the church of Eng- "land; with palpable design to ruin his reputation; to alien- "ate his friends; and surreptitiously snatch from his possess- "sion the moderate remuneration of unremitted attention "and assiduous labour; for no other apparent reason but "that he dared to apprize her of her teacher's extravagancies "*in his own parish.* THIS AND THUS, DID Mrs. H. "MORE." Bere's Cont. p. 3.

False rhymes enough—"*come* & *room;*" "*known* and *bon-ton;*" "*own* and *town,*"

Another sentiment extracted from Florio, with a contrasting action from the Blagdon war.

"When malice longs to throw her dart,
"But finds no vulnerable part,
"Because the virtues all defend,
"At every pass, their guarded friend;

" Then by one slight insinuation,
" One scarce perceiv'd exaggeration;
" Sly RIDICULE, with half a word,
" Can fix her stigma of—absurd;
" Nor care, nor skill, extracts the dart,
" With which she stabs the feeling heart;
" Her cruel caustics inly pain,
" And scars indelible remain."

" For Mrs. More's retractive behaviour, and her people's " uncommon virulence, I could not account, nor was I in- " formed of it till the 5th of Aug. when Dr. Crossman, at " Monkton, gave me to understand that accusations against " me, which I could never see nor hear, had been sent by " Mrs. H. More to the Chancellor and the Bishop, that " those were forwarded to him; that in his reply, he spoke " of me as a person he had well known near 20 years; that " this his letter had been sent to Mrs. H. More; that in " consequence, the lady opened immediately a correspondence " with him, and added *more accusations*, and also enclosed " a letter of Mr. Descury's, containing similar matter."

One more sentimental selection from this poem, with a TRANSACTION, to prove how piously H. More can write, and how virtuously she can act.

" That night no sleep his eyelids prest,
" He thought; and thought 's a foe to rest:
" Or if, by chance, he clos'd his eyes,
" What hideous spectres round him rise!
" Distemper'd Fancy wildly brings
" The broken images of things;
" His ruin'd friend, with eyeball fixt,
" Swallowing the draught Despair had mixt;
" The frantic wife beside him stands,
" With bursting heart, and wringing hands;
" And every horror dreams bestow,
" Of pining want, or raving woe."

To Dr. CROSSMAN.

" Dear Sir, " *Grosvenor Place, Jan.* 17, 1801.

" I have heard so much of Mr. Bere's conduct, and am " so justly offended at it, that I think it my duty to recom- " mend it to you, to dismiss him from your curacy. Your " own good sense and zeal for the cause of religion, will " immediately point out the propriety of it. I am, dear Sir, " your faithful and humble servant,

" C. *Bath and Wells.*"

" Notwithstanding the object you proposed, pursued, and " had apparently once nearly effected, was to rob me of my " character; and although you then proceeded to deprive me " of my curacy and living, and degrade, and dismiss me, " aged and infirm, stamped with ignominy, branded with " crimes, a houseless wretch, to wander about my solitary " way, soliciting and living on the casual bounty of abhor- " ing man," &c. Bere's Address, p. 2.

We meet next with a short poem on the SLAVE TRADE; and almost in the threshold two obscure lines are a stumbling-block.

" Since no resisting cause from spirit flows
" Thy universal presence to oppose."

But although I commiserate the guilt of the woman rather than despise her, a gleam of congenial fire, a spark of genius, even though it should be at second-hand, shall not pass unnoticed. I will be just, even to an enemy. Although I know whence they came, I like to see them, even in their present form.

" Perish the proud philosophy, which sought
" To rob them of the pow'rs of equal thought!
" Does then th' immortal principle within
" Change with the casual colour of a skin?

" Does matter govern spirit? or is mind
" Degraded by the form to which 'tis join'd?
" No: they have heads to think, and hearts to feel,
" And souls to act, with firm, tho' erring zeal;
" For they have keen affections, kind desires,
" Love strong as death, and active patriot fires;
" All the rude energy, the fervid flame
" Of high-soul'd passion, and ingenuous shame:
" Strong, but luxuriant virtues boldly shoot
" From the wild vigour of a savage root."

The following twelve lines are, in the matter and verse, I believe, original; and if any theme could inspire, the fate of the noble Qua-shi must awake.

" No Muse, O Qua-shi!* shall thy deeds relate,
" No statue snatch thee from oblivious fate!
" For thou wast born where never gentle Muse
" On valour's grave the flow'rs of Genius strews;
" And thou wast born where no recording page
" Plucks the *fair deed* from Time's devouring rage.
" Had Fortune plac'd thee on some happier coast,
" Where polish'd Pagans souls heroic boast,

---

* It is a point of honour among negroes of a high spirit to die rather than to suffer their glossy skin to bear the mark of the whip. Qua-shi had somehow offended his master, a young planter, with whom he had been bred up in the endearing intimacy of a play-fellow. His services had been faithful; his attachment affectionate. The master resolved to punish him, and pursued him for that purpose. In trying to escape, Qua-shi stumbled and fell; the master fell upon him; they wrestled long with doubtful victory; at length Qua-shi got uppermost, and, being firmly seated on his master's breast, he secured his legs with one hand, and with the other drew a sharp knife; then said, " Master, I have been bred up with you from a child; I have loved you as myself: in return, you have condemned me to a punishment of which I must ever have borne the marks —thus only I can avoid them:" so saying, he drew the knife with all his strength across his own throat, and fell down dead, without a groan, on his master's body.

Ramsay's Essay on the treatment of African Slaves.

" To thee, who sought'st a voluntary grave,
" Th' uninjur'd honours of thy name to save,
" Whose generous arm thy barbarous master spar'd,
" Altars had smok'd, and temples had been rear'd."

Pious and scrupulous as H. More professes herself to be, we yet see that her religion, to use her own words, is " a convenient one," and that if it favours poetry, any thing can be got by or made of the idea, she has no objection to employ the Pagan mythology, nor to express her approbation of self-murder, which is called a "*fair deed.*" Whatever may be said of the Pagan mythology, which indeed has afforded elegant subjects for the fine arts, I am not so happy as others by invariably approving of it. Pure philosophy, the boundless circuit of nature, genuine history, sacred and profane, afford abundant subjects equally for the poet as the painter and statuary, without any recourse to fable.—But, as she has it, " Poets, indeed, to do them jus-" tice, are always ready for any mischief."

The following passage is the information laid before the House of Commons, thrown into verse. There is no poetry; but my extracts are the best the volume can furnish.

" Whene'er to Afric's shores I turn mine eyes,
" Horrors of deepest, deadliest guilt arise;
" I see, by more than Fancy's mirror shewn,
" The burning village, and the blazing town:
" See the dire victim torn from social life,
" The shrieking babe, the agonizing wife!
" She, wretch forlorn! is dragg'd by hostile hands,
" To distant tyrants sold, in distant lands!
" Transmitted miseries, and successive chains,
" The sole sad heritage her child obtains!

" E'en this last wretched boon their foes deny,
" To weep together, or together die.
" By felon hands, by one relentless stroke,
" See the fond links of feeling Nature broke!
" The fibres twisting round a parent's heart,
" Torn from their grasp, and bleeding as they part."

There is much sympathy expressed for black, but not a word is spoken for white slaves.

In a short poem, entitled DAN and JANE, is exhibited a religious dispute between a man and his wife, about faith and works, of no merit; but I make the following extract, in contrast with *her* good works at Blagdon.

" How shall you know my creed's sincere,
" Unless in works my faith appear?
" How shall I know a tree's alive,
" Unless I see it bear and thrive?
" Your works not growing on my root,
" Wou'd prove they were not genuine fruit.
" If faith produce no works, I see,
" That faith is not a living tree.
" Thus faith and works together grow,
" No separate life they e'er can know:
" They 're soul and body, hand and heart,
" What God hath join'd let no man part."

These are the lady's doctrines, " the excellent, the pious" H. More; here is her practice.

" You also, Madam, are convicted, by the evidence of the " Rector of Blagdon, of transmitting accusations which you " have refused to substantiate. That you are a secret accuser " is proved and admitted. If these accusations were true, " having proceeded so far, being detected and challenged to " maintain your charge, you are criminal and a compounder " of guilt, in not substantiating and publishing them to the " world." Bere's Address, p. 6.

" In this affair nothing of this suavity appears, all is in the " gall of bitterness, and fiery indignation. Hot burning zeal, " *cunning and cruel mixture abhorred.*" Controv. p. 34.

In a poem on SENSIBILITY, with what propriety does the name of Soam Jenyns, however respectable, illustrate the existence of Sensibility, though his least praise should be wit? It was thus by flattery she gained friends and acquaintance, and by artfulness and cunning she preserved them. All the men of letters of the age, especially those of whom she had any acquaintance, are mentioned in this poem, and some incense offered, and she adds,

" And while to these I raise the votive line,
" O let me grateful own these friends are mine."

Notwithstanding this flattery, she knew well Johnson ranked her with the minor poets. That she was obliged to Garrick the world knows, for he exerted all his power and influence to represent her heavy tragedy, until the audience at last insisted on their discontinuance. His loss she laments with tears

" Who now with spirit keen, yet judgment cool,
" The errors of my orphan muse shall rule ?"

A poem on Sensibility ought to furnish some happy lines; the following are among the best:

" And while Discretion all our views shou'd guide,
" Beware, lest secret aims and ends she hide;
" Tho' midst the croud of virtues, 'tis her part,
" Like a firm centinel—to guard the heart;
" Beware, lest Prudence self become unjust,
" Who never was deceiv'd, I wou'd not trust;
" Prudence must never be suspicion's slave,
" The world's wise man is more than half a knave.

" Prompt sense of equity! to thee belongs
" The swift redress of unexamin'd wrongs!
" Eager to serve, the cause perhaps untried,
" But always apt to chuse the suff'ring side!
" So exclamations, tender tones, fond tears,
" And all the graceful drapery Feeling wears;
" These are her garb, not her, they but express
" Her form, her semblance, her appropriate dress;
" And these fair marks, reluctant I relate,
" These lovely symbols may be counterfeit."

The following lines are remarkably characteristic of her conduct in the Blagdon business.

" The hint malevolent, the look oblique,
" The obvious satire, or implied dislike;
" The sneer equivocal, the harsh reply,
" And all the cruel language of the eye;
" The artful injury, whose venom'd dart,
" Scarce wounds the hearing, while it stabs the heart;
" The guarded phrase, whose meaning kills, yet told
" The list'ner wonders, how you thought it cold."

SIR ELDRED of the BOWER sounds well in the title, but it is nothing.

The BLEEDING ROCK, is a poem founded on a real story, well known in the neighbourhood. A gentleman near Bristol, fell in love with a lady of that city, declared his passion, was listened to, and they went to church three different times, but always returned *re infecta*. Miss More thought proper, from her knowledge of the tale, to throw it into rhyme. The lady is metamorphosed into a stone, from which issues a crimson stream. It is said, that near Failand, there really is a spring from a rock, the water of which from the nature of the soil is red.

The disappointment the lady must have felt, being so trifled with, is well and naturally enough imagined, of whom she says pathetically, that he

" Cou'd act the tenderness he never felt,
" In sorrow soften, and in anguish melt.
" The sigh elaborate, the fraudful tear,
" The joy dissembled, and the well-feigned fear,
" All these were his; and his each treacherous art
" That steals the guileless and unpractis'd heart.
" The well-imagin'd tale the nymph believ'd;
" Too unsuspecting not to be deceiv'd:
" The conquest once atchiev'd, the brightest fair,
" When *conquer'd*, was no longer worth his care."

Under the agonies of dereliction, the damsel is supposed to sing—

" Then hasten, righteous powers! my tedious fate,
" Shorten my woes and end my mortal date:
" Quick, let your power transform this failing frame,
" Let me be any thing but what I am!"

The lady now transformed into a stone, the faithless Polydore visits his petrified Ianthe, and plunging a dagger into his own side, which struck also the rock, from the collision issued the purpureous spring. Thus the legend of the well, and the true story so modern and so well known, furnish her with materials for a short poem, in the description of the circumstances of which, she displays more *genuine feeling* than in any other.

Her Ode to Dragon, Mr. Garrick's house-dog, is a misnomer. The idea is grovelling, and the poem too long for an ode. Was there no other method of flattering Mr. and Mrs. Garrick, without being metamorphosed from a cruel stone into a dog of either gender?

The Epitaph on C. Dicey, Esq.

" O pause! repent, repent, resolve, amend!
" Life has no length, eternity no end!

I would recommend Mrs. More to get engraved, and to wear on her bracelets as long as she lives.

The CARPENTER, although there is much Sternhold and Hopkins in it, I like best of any of her pieces. She has adopted Swift's verse, and Swift's mode of mysterious matrimony; and this in the non-descript phraseology, is called " marrying in the Lord." Compared with women in general, Mrs. More must be allowed merit, but she is far behind the first. With Aspasia, Propertia de Rossi, Madame Rolande, and many of our own country-women, she is not to be named. Her books are ephemeral, of improvisatore merit, and mortal like herself. There is no line I should choose to transcribe for private use, or pleasurable recitation. And when we consider what actions, the atchievement of which her heart has dictated, her merits and supposed excellence vanish with the news of a day. In divine poetry she is altogether unsuccessful, for who excelled in that department. Buchanan, Johnstone, and Watts, and a late collection of psalms and hymns in the dissenting church, is all that can be named, and they are excellent; for the merit of both our old and new version of the psalms is humble.

In VILLAGE POLITICS, there are some just remarks; and the endeavour to turn the popular mind from a tendency to riot and rebellion, if ever in this country it had such a bias, was becoming any dutiful subject. But in this little tract, which

Sir A. Elton's injudicious praise induced me to read, is contained so much nonsense or real ignorance, that I cannot avoid saying it disgustingly lies throughout. That she was paid there can be no doubt. No hireling, to render the war popular, (and the child unborn may rue the day it became so) could be more venal, or less respect truth and decency. Christianity and philosophy owe her no obligation, she has profited little from both; and in H. More's VILLAGE POLITICS, they are equally unamiable.

If she had any regard for human happiness, or her own reputation, for truth or intelligence, she would, instead of introducing it into her works, have disowned the piece.

She, however, appears not to be ignorant of what liberality and charity mean; and this renders her perversion of fact, and studious and deliberate falsehood, the more lamentable. In a work of imagination, she was at liberty to form and cast her characters in her own moulds; but in an argument of facts to falsifie, is a demonstration of wretched venality. Although but few Britons covet republicanism, no man but for hire will deny that mankind have lived as happily under a democratical form of government as any other. Had she forgot, or did she ever learn, that the world owes all its knowledge in arts and science, all its civilization to the Grecian and Roman republics? Has man tasted no happiness in Carthage, Venice, Switzerland or Holland; and are the inhabitants of the United States, because their government is representative, to be wretched and contemptible? The

writer of this is a sincere and strenuous friend to the mixed form of government established in Britain; and he belongs to two privileged orders; but he is also a friend to truth, justice, and liberality. Excellence, sublimity of genius, elegant taste, eminence in arts and sciences, are confined to no country or political constitution.

But the war-whoop of party must be sung; the dogs of war must be let loose; France was a fine subject of partition, a spacious theatre for the ambitious, an immense source of endless plunder for the rapacious soldier: war is an inexhaustible mine for the voracious contractor, who is to be enriched by the ruin of millions, to be made happy by the miseries of mankind, and for the hordes of the profligate and needy, ready at all times to engage in any cause where exists the prospect of fattening on slaughter, and revelling in blood, rising on their country's ruin; and H. More, must also, for a mite, sound her hoarse ministerial rattle, shew herself a woman of contracted philosophy, of religion without charity, of piety without mercy, of knowledge without discrimination, by joining in the cry, and vociferate, with Amazonian fury, Hark! forward! Out come "Tommy Bull's advice to Johnny Bull;" Village Politics, and other trash, of a more fatally inebriating quality than the gin of which she complains; and Jack Anvil, and Tom Hod, and millions more, are infatuated and deluded to join in the chace, and continue in the delirious attempt of teaching others how to arrange their domestic affairs and cook their victuals, what they shall eat and drink for nine long years, till after having had

their own heads and their neighbour's broken, and spent more money than they will be ever able to pay, when they return from the public-house, and find that the OLD MANSION, the constitution, instead of being improved in their absence, has greatly dilapidated by their dissipation and neglect. How much more amiable and becoming her profession of christianity, and more characteristic of female feeling; how much would humanity now owe to her, supposing her to have influence, if she had exerted herself in favour of peace, and against the shedding of human blood! But her innate disposition and her venality, led her to sanguinary deeds, and whenever she heard of a battle, instead of retiring to shed tears over the miseries which pride, ambition, and injustice, were bringing on the human race, and praying that the whole earth might be re-christianized, and the kingdoms of the world become kingdoms of Christ, she brought her punch in a "lordly dish," and like the uneducated and unbaptized companion of an Indian chief, boasting of her number of scalps, she rejoiced over the havoc, and taught the people to thirst for more! This is well known. Not such the conduct of the brave and virtuous, the true christian.

In this manner a revolution become necessary by ages of tyranny, effected without a drop of bloodshed, by promising immediate happiness not only to twenty-four millions of Frenchmen, but probably to all the nations of the earth, became an object of envy and hatred to the surrounding nations; individuals, therefore, conspire against it, and crusades are undertaken to defeat its establishment, and

heaven and earth are moved, and the pens and the tongues of the venal employed to blacken and disgrace the very name of liberty; insomuch, that it was profane and criminal, even in England, to pronounce the word; and the people of that nation are instigated to massacre one another. All these crimes are charged to liberty; and to these H. M. gave her voice. No man abhors more than I do the French enormities.

That this criticism may not be considered as malicious, let the reader only look at the answer she makes her Jack Anvil give to Tom Hod's question of "What dost thou take French liberty to be?" and the seven following interrogatories, and then, giving the devil his due, let him judge and pronounce whether she be a temporizing venal creature. Let him read also the answer to the question, "Dost thou then believe they are as cruel as some folks pretend?" And let him determine whether she be hypocrite, christian, liar or what. Has she not leaped for joy when she heard of the slaughter of thousands on both sides? All this is in direct opposition to the principles of christianity, of which she makes so much profession.

It would seem that superstition had hitherto been a necessary ingredient in every, even the purest religion. This drove men to a contempt of all religion, to infidelity and atheism, with which the French are charged. But if religion were purified of superstition and refined to pure christianity, then philosophers would become christians.

ABOUT this time Miss H. More was attending the play-houses, picking up all the knowledge she could meet with, to qualify herself for a play-wright. She had, it is said, more than one offer of matrimony. A gentleman on the stage made her proposals, which were listened to for a considerable time; but his troop decamping, on his departure with them, a sea captain next presented himself. During the sailor's visits, and while his vessel was preparing for her voyage, a man of good fortune made his appearance, and being dressed in a red coat, always ensnaring of the female heart, every attention was paid him, and love obtained an easy victory; but after a long and tedious courtship, whether owing to her violence of temper, or to what cause, I have not been able to discover, it ended in a separation. I have, however, heard many anecdotes not worth relating. It was at this time too, she met with an advantageous bargain, by purchasing an annuity of 200l. a year for her life, at a *very easy rate.*

She was now, on the addition of 200l. a year, and her interest in the school, increasing her popularity daily, for money recommends; and her sacred dramas, which were much puffed by her party among the methodists, contributed to her advancement. Her books, though trifling, always added to her income, for the saints took care to buy them. Her plays, and her attachment to the play-house, as her finances permitted it, induced her to pass a

part of the winter in London, and these opportunities she improved, by universal flattery, of adding to the number of her acquaintances and friends. Her marriage disappointment is said to have soured her temper, and resolving against any further attempt to enter that state, she cast about for some mode besides writing, for the employment of her mind and body; and religion, to her active and ambitious soul, presented itself as an instrument and means of acquiring popularity and consequence, as well as promotive of her future welfare. The methodistical societies, "which are neither of nor out of the church," appeared the most convenient, for thus she could enjoy all the advantages of a separatist, without appearing to be one.

But it is not from H. More only, that the world has learned that austerity is not virtue, and that the semblance of virtue is widely different from virtue herself. Her conversion, which was then talked of, is yet to come. Her heart may now, for any thing I know, be, by God's blessing, softened, having discovered that semblance and reality are in their nature different; and these late detections of her mental character, may become the means of bringing her back from a visionary to a rational piety; for true religion is not the business of life but a rule of conduct.

In the account which Mrs. Robinson, the celebrated Perdita, left behind her of her own life, she mentions the five sisters in the following words. "The early hours of boarding school study, I pas-
"sed under the tuition of the Misses More, sisters
"to the lady of that name, whose talents have been

" so often celebrated. The education of their young " pupils was undertaken by the five sisters. In my " mind's eye, I see them now before me; while " every circumstance of those early days, is mi- " nutely and indelibly impressed on my memory.

" I remember the first time I ever was present at " a dramatic representation; it was the benefit of " the great actor, Mr. Powel, who was proceed- " ing rapidly towards the highest paths of fame, " when death dropped the oblivious curtain, and " closed the scene for ever. The part which he " performed was King Lear; his wife, afterwards " Mrs. Fisher, played Cordelia, but not with suffi- " cient eclat to render the profession an object for " her future exertions. The whole school attended; " Mrs. Powel's two daughters being then pupils of " the Misses More."

The formal stateliness of that species of prosaic verse employed by the writers of English tragedy, is so familiar to British ears and eyes, as the channel and conductor of heroic virtue, or of atrocious crime, that the person who ventures to use it exclusively for sacred or ludicrous subjects, is more likely rather to excite our risibility and cause disgust, than secure our approbation and sympathy. Although it may be allowed, that virtue may be taught on the stage and vice corrected, yet in Britain, there is and ever will be, a prejudice with the graver order of the people against it. The attitudes, the songs, often the sentiment and expression, the characters represented, as well as that of many of those who act them, are not calculated to remove that prejudice; and it would be difficult to determine, whether the

morals of the people are mended or corrupted by the theatre. The safest judgment is to consider it as a place of entertainment and amusement.

The holy bible is either the inspired word of God, or it is the venerable history of a people who have been, and are the peculiar object of God's providential regard. In the former light it has been always viewed and received by all christians, and especially by protestants. To attempt, therefore, the illustration or improvement of any scriptural story in that measured prose, and in a dramatic method and form, with even the best intention, if it does not travesty, it at least lessens our veneration for the subjects of scripture, and always excites disgust. H. More, therefore, appears guilty of at least an error of judgment, by the publication of scripture plays, and holy bible tragedies. If the bible be the word of God, and who can doubt it, I cannot but call that part of her works *impiety*. In sacred poesy, even the learned and pious Dr. Watts was not very successful; what execution then could we expect from the illiterate H. More? There is neither invention, genius, plot or description in her dramas. I am not the only critic of this opinion.

" And sacred dramas wrote by Hannah More,
" Where all the nine and little Moses snore."

Her muse is always hobbling and ever out of nature. Her Miriam does neither feel nor speak like a sister.

Vol. 2, p. 32. MIRIAM.

" Yes, I have laid him in his wat'ry bed;
" His wat'ry grave, I fear !—I tremble still;
" It was a cruel task—still I must weep !
" But ah, my mother ! who shall sooth thy griefs ?

" The flags and sea-weeds will awhile sustain
" Their precious load; but it must sink ere long!
" Sweet babe, farewell! Yet think not I will leave thee;
" No, I will watch thee till the greedy waves
" Devour thy little bark: I'll sit me down,
" And sing to thee, sweet babe; thou canst not hear;
" But 'twill amuse me, while I watch thy fate."

The following passage, p. 45, 46, is out of nature.

JOCHEBED.

" But soft, does no one listen?—Ah! how hard,
" How very hard for fondness to be prudent!
" Now is the moment to embrace and feed him.
" Where's Miriam? she has left her little charge,
" Perhaps through fear; perhaps she was detected.
" How wild is thought! how terrible conjecture!
" A mother's fondness frames a thousand fears,
" With thrilling nerve feels every real ill,
" And shapes imagin'd miseries into being."

David's prayer, part iv. of DAVID and GOLIATH, is too long, abounding with repetitions and inconsistencies. In every line is an address, just like the prayer of the non-descripts, which is all a beginning, no middle, or body, and whose termination is God knows where. In short, it is not a prayer.

The sacred dramas, or holy bible plays, is, I think, a burlesque of religion. What she has written under that title, is no illustration of the story, frequently a perversion of it. We feel, thereby, no virtue confirmed, no vice corrected, and yet there is a perpetual exertion in defence of virtue. H. More's merit consists in a power and ability to say much with much exertion; yet she has the misfortune, though she affords a little pleasure and amusement, of leaving no impression behind, just as it has been

remarked of my brother Sir A. Elton's speeches, in which there is always a *verbiage*, a copia verborum, that when he has ended we remember nothing of what he has said.

" Did I unjustly seek to build my name
" On the pil'd ruins of another's fame?
" Did I abhor as hell th' insidious lie,
" The low deceit, th' unmanly calumny?"

In the REFLECTIONS of KING HEZEKIAH, her measure is badly chosen, and she appears to be more than usually feeble, though the subject might have led her to higher strains. Blank verse would have suited the subject better. " *Come* and *home*" are false rhymes.

I defy any man of judgment and sense to read her prologue, even were she a woman of considerable beauty, and to say, " that is the woman I would choose to marry." The man who marries wishes for simplicity and female accomplishments, not a " IT, HE, SHE creature."

" If she shou'd set her heart upon a rover,
" And he prove false, she'd kick her faithless lover."

That I may not be charged with injustice, I will here transcribe from David and Goliath, a passage containing one of her best descriptions. P. 101-2.

DAVID.

" Not so, O King!
" This youthful arm has been imbru'd in blood,
" Tho' yet no blood of man has ever stain'd it.
" Thy servant's occupation is a shepherd.
" With jealous care I watch'd my father's flock;
" A brindled lion and a furious bear
" Forth from the thicket rush'd upon the fold,

" Seiz'd a young lamb, and tore their bleating spoil.
" Urg'd by compassion for my helpless charge,
" I felt a new-born vigour nerve my arm;
" And, eager, on the foaming monsters rush'd.
" The famish'd lion by his grisly beard,
" Enrag'd, I caught, and smote him to the ground.
" The panting monster struggling in my gripe,
" Shook terribly his bristling mane, and lash'd
" His own gaunt, goary sides; fiercely he ground
" His gnashing teeth, and roll'd his starting eyes,
" Bloodshot with agony; then with a groan,
" That wak'd the echoes of the mountain, dy'd.
" Nor did his grim associate 'scape my arm;
" Thy servant slew the lion and the bear;
" I kill'd them both, and bore their shaggy spoils
" In triumph home: And shall I fear to meet
" Th' uncircumcis'd Philistine! No: that God
" Who sav'd me from the bear's destructive fang
" And hungry lion's jaw, will not he save me
" From this idolater?"

From her BELSHAZZAR, p. 143.

DANIEL.

" Yes, Thou art ever present, Pow'r Supreme!
" Not circumscrib'd by time, nor fix'd to space,
" Confin'd to altars, nor to temples bound.
" In wealth, in want, in freedom, or in chains,
" In dungeons or on thrones, the faithful find thee!
" E'en in the burning cauldron thou wast near
" To Shadrach and the holy brotherhood:
" The unhurt martyrs bless'd thee in the flames;
" They sought, and found Thee; call'd, and Thou wast there."

If her best friends can select from her works passages more favourable to her merit, I shall be glad to look at them.

Her SEARCH after HAPPINESS she says she wrote in *very early youth*. Her experience then she acquired very early, for she writes like a matron. Experience, knowledge, innocence, are not attributes of the same person. H. More's experience, therefore, by her own account, was attained in very early youth. She wrote the prologue herself, from which I transcribe—

"No husband wrong'd who trusted and believ'd,
"No father cheated, and no friend deceiv'd;
"No libertine in glowing strains describ'd,
"No lying chambermaid that rake had brib'd."

Who would wish to see his daughter or his sister speak this prologue, this succedaneum for "less *pure*" compositions, before a large company?

"Whether we learn *too well* what we describe,
"Or *fail* the Poet's meaning to imbibe;
"In either case your blame we justly raise,
"In either lose, or ought to lose, your praise."

Why the dramatic mode of discussing a didactic or protreptical subject was chosen, no reason can be given; but, as the Dean said,

"Like every cock she must be treading."

The lady must be a universal genius.

"I sigh'd (says she, p. 296) for fame, I languish'd for renown,
"I would be flatter'd, prais'd, admir'd, and known.
"To boast each various faculty of mind,
"Thy graces, Pope! with Johnson's learning join'd."

An enquiry after happiness, in the form of a pastoral drama, sounds like a sermon in rhyme, or a dramatic homily, or a play in a church. But her genius is not of that gigantic strength which, like

the sun contending with a dark and cloudy atmosphere, at length in its struggles bursts out, dispeling all surrounding vapours, into a clear and perfect day; or that forceth nature, or the rules of art founded in nature, to sink and disappear before her, and that calls into existence a new creation. Her strength consists in the faculty of casting the prose thoughts of others into rhyme, and thus hashed, made up and garnished, and seasoned with the sound of "Virtue and religion," the cook being a female, criticism lost its sting, and dropped her fastidiousness. The fecundity of this prolific lady is multifarious, and her numerous offspring might have passed from the cradle to the grave, had she not been blessed with a pair of good sparkling, wandering eyes, and a censer always smoking in her hand, which when perceived, disarmed the critics. Although it is not meant to deny her some literary merit, it is certain she is not entitled to the praise bestowed. Her literary reputation is principally factitious; and had she not made a noise about religion, merely to have a party, for she thought it was better to reign among them than serve elsewhere, she would have been, as now she is likely soon to be, entirely forgotten.—Her popularity was acquired with a very small stock of original genius; and secured and retained by flattery and cunning. But that charm is now dissolved. Circumstances have occurred to be for ever lamented by her and her friends, which have made the world desirous of knowing more intimately a character which possessed address, with so humble a genius, to attract so much attention,

and to be so often and so long the subject of conversation; and of appreciating her literary talents, as well as her mental character. This I have here attempted, and alas! with too much success; for her writings and her actions, her head and her heart are very discordant.

Bliss and *ness*, according to her, are rhymes, and so are *shade* and *mead*, also *er* and *ar*, *join'd* and *mind*; but these are the rhymes "of a Bristol pool." Let us make some extracts from this poem.

"Howe'er the conduct of my life might err,
"Still my dramatic plans were regular."

Alas! poor Hannah, both have been irregular. Again—

"Not *love*, but *wonder*, I aspir'd to raise,
"And miss'd *affection*, while I grasp'd at *praise*.

"A fancy'd heroine, an *ideal* wife;
"I loath'd the offices of real life.

"O happy they for whom, in early age,
"Enlight'ning knowledge spreads her letter'd page!
"Teaches each headstrong passion to controul,
"And pours her lib'ral lesson on the soul!
"Ideas grow from books their nat'ral food,
"As aliment is chang'd to vital blood.
"Tho' faithless Fortune strip her vot'ry bare,
"Tho' Malice haunt him, and tho' Envy tear,
"Nor time, nor chance, nor want, can e'er destroy
"This soul-felt solace, and this bosom joy!"

ANOTHER.

"Let the proud sex possess their vaunted pow'rs;
"Be other triumphs, other glories, ours!
"The gentler charms which wait on female life,
"Which grace the daughter and adorn the wife,

"Be these our boast; yet these may well admit
"Of various knowledge, and of blameless wit:
"Of sense, resulting from a nurtur'd mind,
"Of polish'd converse, and of taste refin'd."

VOL. III. TRAGEDIES.

IN a long and laboured preface to her tragedies, H. More has exerted her utmost strength, with, probably, some friendly efforts from those who are indeed holy, to purify herself from her youthful follies, indiscretions and sins, in hopes of appearing spotless among the religious; but she makes but an awkward and inconsistent saint. Her endeavours would go to prove the stage, under some ideal, mysterious and *non-described* regulations, a good school for virtue, yet not a proper spectacle for a person who turns christian. She is ashamed and sorry for having written plays, she wishes it to be forgotten that she ever constructed or launched any; that she ever attended the green room, stood behind the scenes, or waited in agonies the decisions of the gods and the pit. She apologizeth for having done so; she republishes them, however, and apologizeth for the act; she writes for and against the stage; she says, "video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor." In short, she exhibits a knowing, cunning, wicked & weak woman. Her doctrine seems to be "to continue in sin that grace may abound." What was a sin in her youth, she in her old age, when she is likely to be able to sin no more, acknowledgeth; but wisheth the world to

know how numerous and great these were; that they may the more readily give her credit for the eminence of her sanctity. The depravity, the weakness, inconsistency, and folly of human nature, is most glaringly conspicuous in this preface, wherein she repents, "looks back on the city," wishes to forsake her sins, yet sins again, hates and loves her former ways, wants to be virtuous and receive her reward without being really so, and to be thought holy without washing herself from her sin.

The whole of this conduct is explicable only on this principle, namely, an overweaning opinion of her own merit, which much artfulness and cunning are employed to conceal, and an insuperable vanity and love of adulation, which impelled her, as by an irresistible necessity, to live on in her old habits, and to repeat the sin of the republication of tragedies, a new species of instruction and amusement, which, at the same time, she maintains, in others, to be sinful and immoral. But she is now converted to non-descriptism; and perhaps made her "election sure," being likely no more to "*fall* "*back*." The dramas, sacred and profane, were a considerable addition to the bulk, and, therefore, to the price of the copy-right; and what vestal or monk ever abstained from sin when tempted by money!

Lest my reader, who may not have perused, or not have by him, our author's works, should doubt the justice of my criticism, I transcribe a paragraph from the preface to 3d vol. p. 14.

" This observation adopted into practice might, it is pre-
" sumed, effectually abolish the qualifying language of many
" of the more *sober* frequenters of the theatre, '*that they go*
" *but seldom, and never but to a good play.*' We give these
" moderate and discreet persons all due praise for compara-
" tive sobriety. But while they *go at all*, the principle is
" the same; for they sanction, by going sometimes, a diver-
" sion which is not to be defended on strict christian prin-
" ciples. Indeed their acknowledging that it should be but
" sparingly frequented, probably arises from a conviction
" that it is not *quite* right.

" I have already remarked, that it is not the object of this
" address to pursue the usual track of attacking *bad* plays,
" of which the more prudent and virtuous seldom vindicate
" the principle, though they do not always scrupulously avoid
" attending the exhibition. I impose rather on myself the
" unpopular task of animadverting on the dangerous effects
" of those which come under the description of *good* plays;
" for from those chiefly arises the danger (if danger there be)
" to good people."

" It is generally the leading object of the poet to erect a
" standard of HONOUR in direct opposition to the standard of
" *christianity*. Honour is the religion of tragedy. Love,
" jealousy, hatred, ambition, pride, revenge, are too often
" elevated into the rank of splendid virtues, and form a daz-
" zling system of worldly morality, in direct contradiction
" to the spirit of that religion whose characteristics are '*cha-*
" *rity, meekness, peaceableness, long-suffering, gentle-*
" *ness, forgiveness.*' 'The fruits of the SPIRIT' and the
" fruits of the STAGE, if the parallel were followed up, as it
" might easily be, would, perhaps exhibit, as pointed a con-
" trast as human imagination could conceive."

" People are told—and from whose mouth do they hear
" it? That '*blessed are the poor in spirit, the meek* and *the*
" *peace-makers.*' Will not these and such like humbling
" propositions, delivered one day in seven only, in all the

"sober and beautiful simplicity of our church, with all the "force of truth indeed, but with all its plainness also, be "more than counter-balanced by the speedy and much more "frequent recurrence of the nightly exhibition, whose pre-"cise object it too often is, not only to preach, but to per-"sonify doctrines in diametrical and studied opposition to "poverty of spirit, to purity, to meekness, forbearance, "and forgiveness. Doctrines, not simply expressed, as "those of the Sunday are, in the naked form of axioms, "principles, and precepts, but realized, embodied, made "alive, furnished with organs, clothed, decorated, brought "into lively discourse, into interesting action; enforced "with all the energy of passion, adorned with all the graces "of language, and exhibited with every aid of emphatical "delivery, every attraction of appropriate gesture. To "such a complicated temptation is it wise voluntarily, "studiously, unnecessarily to expose frail and erring crea-"tures? Is not the conflict too severe? Is not the com-"petition too unequal?"

"And it is perhaps one of the most invincible objec-"tions to many tragedies, otherwise not very exception-"able, that the awful and tremendous name of the infi-"nitely glorious God is shamefully, and almost inces-"santly introduced in various scenes, both in the way of "asseveration and of invocation."

"I purposely forbear in this place repeating any of those "higher arguments drawn from the utter irreconcileable-"ness of this indulgence of the fancy, of this gratification "of the senses, this unbounded roving of the thoughts, "with the divine injunction of bringing '*every thought* "into the obedience of Christ."

"It is the concomitant pageantry, it is the splendour of "the spectacle, and even the show of the spectators:— "these are the circumstances which altogether fill the the-"atre—which altogether produce the effect—which alto-"gether create the danger. These give a pernicious force

" to sentiments which, when read, merely explain the mys-
" terious action of the human heart; but which when thus
" uttered, thus accompanied, become contagious and de-
" structive. These, in short, make up a scene of tempta-
" tation and seduction, of over-wrought voluptuousness,
" and unnerving pleasure, which surely ill accords with
" ' *working out our salvation with fear and trembling*,'
" or with that frame of mind which implies that ' the
" world is crucified to us, and we to the world."

In this manner H. More writes respecting the immorality and corrupting tendency of theatrical amusements, of which she herself was once so fond, and from which she cannot now entirely wean herself. Of its voluptuousness, amatory scenes, profligacy, its temptations, its seductions to a thousand follies, wickedness, & even crimes, she writes with all her force, and in the very same introduction or preface to her plays, which she republishes at a time of life when amatory scenes and voluptuousness are supposed to have little attraction, she permits plays to be read; it " does
" not appear," she says, " necessary to debar *accom-*
" *plished young ladies*." In plain terms, " accom-
" plished young ladies," may partake of " *volup-*
" *tuousness, amatory scenes, and follies*," and go to the Devil, for the " preface," she adds, " is not ad-
" dressed to the *gay* and *dissolute;* to such as
" profess themselves to be ' *lovers of pleasure more*
" *than lovers of God;*' but it is addressed to the
" *more sober-minded*, to *those who believe the gospel*
" *of Jesus Christ;* who wish to be enlightened by
" its doctrines, to be governed by its precepts,
" and who profess to be ' *seeking a better country,*
" *even a heavenly one*."

Mrs. H. More might have as well addressed the public in this manner, and said, good folks! I have a little ship arrived from the Levant, with the plague on board, but the goods are of an excellent quality; but, nevertheless, as she is mine, and opium and coffee are likely to fetch a good price, though it would be illegal and wrong to suffer any other vessel to unload, and import the pest for the destruction of his Majesty's subjects, I must have my ship immediately delivered, without performing any quarantine.

If H. More really believes in christianity (of which I am persuaded she does not believe a word) and at the same time believes what she so copiously and forcibly declares, the deleterious effects of tragedy and comedy on the morals of the people, even the most serious, what other epithets than diabolical and hypocritical can be applied to her name, who advertiseth, selleth, and publicly administereth the poison. But perhaps for the criminality of this act, as well as for the rest of her transactions, there may be some salvo reserved for her conscience in the non-descript system of christianity. We know that most crimes are remissible to those who profess sincerely their species of orthodoxy. She must have some mode of satisfying her mind in her GRAND-SCHEME; for they make higher pretensions to the keys than even the Vicar of Christ himself.

The writer of these remarks will be happy if he shall discover that he has misunderstood his author, for he would have believed it on no other

evidence but that of his own senses, the book being now before him, in proportion as he laments the discovery of a female of great and noisy pretensions, but whose mental character till now has not been known, acting with so much duplicity and on so depraved principles. The clergy once censured Pope for his Essay on Man, doubting the sincerity of his faith; what will they now think of Hannah More, whose principles are so ambiguous and secret, and who is detected in a GRAND-SCHEME of creating a schism in the church.

It is always pleasant to see the wicked repentant; to see a sinner the apologist of virtue. But there are strange, false, temporary conversions in the modern world. It is reduced to a system, directed by rules, taught as an art. They talk of their grace with vanity and pride, and of their conversion as of a change in their circumstances, a prize in the lottery, or the succession to an estate. But publicly to vend the balm of Gilead, and poisonous and deleterious drugs from the same shop, and praise and dispraise both, proves that the seller loves money above all things. If she wishes to be considered as an honest person, acting in any way consistently with her professions, as making any distinction between virtue and vice, impudence and modesty, she will immediately cancel that preface and her dramas, or, preserving them, renounce her supererogatory professions of religion. "Sell, madam, all that thou "hast," buy them up and burn them, otherwise

thy name, as it does now, will continue to stink in the nostrils of all consistent, honest persons, and be what you seem so desirous of appearing, a saint; or continue what, from this act and your former and late conduct, you seem really to be, more *plausible* than *sincere*.

Fathers! Mothers! Guardians! Governors! and Governesses! H. More descants on virtue and piety, writes against the stage, players and play-wrights, as wicked and destructive of religion and morals, ruinous to the souls and bodies of those who write, read, act, and see the spectacles; and yet she has written, seen acted, and now in her old age republisheth her own plays! Whether H. More's writings are calculated to do more good than evil, is a question of no great solvable difficulty.

After displaying all her eloquence and ingenuity in condemning all dramatic works whatever, she directly insults the human understanding, by justifying the perusal of them in the closet; as if that which she calls a poison, taken publicly, would be a salutary and safe medicine swallowed in private. "The passing over vir-
"tuous plays," she says in page 42, "merely be-
"cause they are in a dramatic form, would be an
"instance of scrupulosity, which one might ven-
"ture to say no well-informed conscience could
"suggest." It is much to be feared, from many of her transactions, that her conscience is very elastic.

" Women especially, (she tells us) whose walk in life is " so circumscribed, and whose avenues of information are " so few, may, I conceive, learn to know the world with " less danger, and to study human nature with more ad- " vantage, from the perusal of *selected* parts of this in- " comparable genius (Shakespeare) than from most other " attainable sources."

What are we to infer from all this? That women with great caution should have a selection of dramatic works, because more is dangerous to their mental and bodily purity; to their minds by reading them in private, to both mind and body in the representation. Are we, or are we not, to consider her mind, in whatever state her body may be, as contaminated? Has she not written dramatically, seen her own and other people's works acted, been behind the scenes, associated with the histrionic faculty? Has she not, to use her own words (p. 44) conceived, imagined, and represented in private, all possible ideas, situations, actions, and attitudes, which " make up a scene " of temptation and seduction, of over-wrought " voluptuousness, and unnerving pleasure, which " surely ill accord with '*working out our own sal-* " *vation with fear and trembling?*" Her who thus describes her own knowledge, and tells us she has so experienced it, we must consider, like Solomon, to have " chosen wisdom," and to have gone through all situations and scenes, to attain her wisdom and knowledge. Are we then to be wicked as preparatory to piety and virtue; and is it necessary to do evil that good may come of it? Her knowledge, by her own account, seems not

to be compatible with innocence. H. More, were Lady Mac Sarcasm dead and gone, I declare I will not have you as my wife, my companion, or my friend. I hate duplicity.

The inconsistent lady concludes her preface with saying,

"The stage is by universal consent allowed to be no in-
"different thing. The impressions it makes on the mind,
"are deep and strong; deeper and stronger perhaps than are
"made by any other amusement. If then such impres-
"sions be in the general hostile to christianity, the whole
"resolves itself into this short question—Should a christian
"frequent it?"

I ask her, should a christian, an "*evangelical* "*christian*," write and publish plays and tragedies? Alas! I fear she *brought forth* this work at least, without *conception*.

That her PERCY contains a few, and but a few, good sentiments, the just critic will not deny. The language is bold and strong, but not always chaste. There is no plot, and she labours going about to introduce a sentiment. Horror is sometimes excited, fear never, it is "without "hope," and no sympathy is felt. There is a preparation for the catastrophe, but it clears off like an approaching fit of sneezing, which tantalizeth and never exonerates the brain, but dies away; at last it comes so feebly that we come away disgusted. What virtue was intended to be commended by this piece, the reader must use good glasses to discover.

Let the reader take the following specimens of our lady in tragedy; they are the best I could find.

ELWINA.

" When policy assumes religion's name,
" And wears the sanctimonious garb of faith,
" Only to colour fraud and license murder,
" War then is tenfold guilt."
" 'Tis not the crosier, nor the pontiff's robe,
" Nor outward show, nor form of sanctity,
" Nor Palestine destroy'd, nor Jordan's banks
" Delug'd with blood of slaughter'd infidels,
" No, nor th' extinction of the Eastern world,
" Nor all the wild, pernicious, bigot rage
" Of mad crusades, can bribe that Pow'r, who sees
" The motive with the act. O blind to think
" Fanatic wars can please the Prince of Peace!
" He who erects his altar in the heart,
" Abhors the sacrifice of human blood,
" And hates the false devotion of that zeal
" Which massacres the world he died to save."

The reader will, no doubt, remember her " im-
" pious rage" to promote the present war in Village Politics, and every where. " No pull me down
" works," she says in Village Politics; but she moves heaven and earth, and privately accuses Mr. Bere, to turn *him* out, and bring her own disciple in—
" to get a new constitution!" " Pretend liberty of
" conscience, and then shoot at and hang the par-
" sons, for being conscientious." Ibid.

SIR HUBERT.

" Percy, thou hast seen the musk-rose newly blown
" Disclose its bashful beauties to the sun;
" When lo! a chilling storm at once descends,
" Sweeps all its blushing glories to the dust,
" Bows its fair head, and blasts its op'ning charms.
" So droop'd the maid, beneath the cruel weight
" Of my sad tale."

" She may be chang'd,
" Spite of her tears, her fainting, and alarms.
" I know the sex, know them as nature made 'em,
" Not such as lovers wish, and poets feign."

DOUGLAS.

" Yes ! here I do devote the forfeit blood
" Of him my soul abhors, a rich libation
" On thy infernal altar, black revenge."

Let me present you, reader, with a parallel out of the lady's real life.

" I knew at this time, what lengths you were capable of " going in the GRAND-SCHEME. Deprive me of my cu- " racy, living, and degrade me." Bere's Address.

" Yes, I will feast my hatred with your pangs;
" And make his dying groans and thy fond tears
" A banquet for my vengeance."

Another parallel from Mrs. More's real life.

" A more deadly stroke than this, the hand of power " could not give ; it disgraced my name, detached my friend, " invaded my property, and as far as the influence extended, " was meant to preclude me the functions of my profession, " in which I had borne an unsullied reputation near thirty " years ; and all this was to be heaped on an innocent per- " son unheard, *on the scandalous representations of those* " who have since been ashamed to shew their faces." Bere's Address.

Another extract and parallel from H. More's Percy, and Bere's Address.

" Agonizing state,
" When I can neither hope, nor think, nor pray,
" But guilt involves me !"

" But No. 3, you suppressed. Was this, in your con- " science, acting as a christian ? What to attempt secretly " to destroy by sap, the character of a clergyman in the opi- " nion of his bishop ! Was there no compunction, no re-

" morse? Had you altogether forgotten what it was to " suffer in reputation ?"

One more parallel.

" The sorrow's weak that wastes itself in words.
" Mine is substantial anguish—deep, not loud.
" I do not rave.—Resentment's the return
" Of common souls for common injuries.
" Light grief is proud of state, and courts compassion;
" But there's a dignity in cureless sorrow,
" A sullen grandeur which disdains complaint.
" Rage is for little wrongs—Despair is dumb."

" Your silence will be deemed the conviction of guilt." Bere's Address.

When FATAL FALSEHOOD was represented at Covent-Garden, a remarkable circumstance took place, which tends greatly to corroborate an observation already made, " that H. More's merit " consists in casting readily the sentiments of other " writers into verse." Mrs. Cowley, who was in the side-box, exclaimed at a certain scene, so loud as to alarm the whole house, " That is mine, " that is mine," several times, and fainted away, and was at last carried out. After some interruption and confusion, the words " it is Mrs. Cowley," being several times repeated in different parts of the house, the play was permitted to go on.

While I am writing these remarks, a pamphlet is published, entitled, " ANIMADVERSIONS on the CURATE of BLAGDON's three publications." The authors and contributors are numerous, H. More and Co. and they make a vain attempt to vindicate her conduct to Mrs. Cowley, and Mrs. Yearsley. But they durst not put a name to it. Contemp-

rible as they consider themselves, and as they really are, they were ashamed to own this Ethiopian. They descend to a scurrility, disgraceful even to their party; and with discerning men they could not better plead Mr. Bere's cause. The author of a "damned play," who could not climb up so high on Parnassus as to rank even with the minor poets, was the chief contributor; and through an apprehension of being "damned" in prose, he fights in a mask.* This, Hannah, who delights in "secret deeds," judged the best method of defending "private accusations." In no other way durst she ever venture to calumniate or defend calumny. Stage whispers were not loud enough; but, unfortunately for her, the more is published on her side, the more, if it be possible, she is disgraced. She does not make the least attempt, nor her creatures for her, to palliate or extenuate the guilt of "secret accusations." The woman, who confines herself, pretending illness, and to be dying, and writes and superintends the scurrilous and lying publications of her anonymous disciples, is not deplorably, but incurably depraved. And that this is now, and has been long the case, as is her practice when she has a quarrel, is sufficiently known. H. More, with her "damned poet," who is so prominent in this work,

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* No flimsey, linsey-woolsey scenes I wrote,
With patches here and there like Joseph's coat.
Who to patch up her fame—or fill her purse,
Still pilfers wretched plans, and makes them worse.

at her elbow, and her missionaries bringing forward their contribution of stories, puts me in mind of some lines.

" In Yorkshire dwelt a sober yeoman,
" Whose wife a clean pains-taking woman,
" Fed numerous poultry in her pens,
" And saw her cocks well serve her hens.
" A hen she had, whose tuneful clocks
" Drew after her a train of cocks;
" With eyes so piercing, yet so pleasant,
" You would have sworn this hen a pheasant.
" All the plum'd *beau-monde* round her, gathers,
" Lord! what a brustling up of feathers:
" Morning from noon there was no knowing,
" There was such flutt'ring, chuckling, crowing:
" Each forward bird must thrust his head in,
" And not a cock but wou'd be treading.
" Yet tender was this hen so fair,
" And hatch'd more chicks than she cou'd rear.
" Our prudent dame bethought her then,
" Of some dry nurse to save her hen:
" She made a capon drunk; in fine
" He eat the sops, she drank the wine;
" His rump well pluck'd with nettles stings,
" And claps the brood beneath his wings,
" The feather'd dupe awakes content,
" O'erjoy'd to see what God had sent;
" Thinks he's the hen, clocks, keeps a pother,
" A foolish foster-father-mother!"

" Such, Miss Hannah, are your tricks;
" But since you hatch, pray own your chicks;
" You should be better skill'd in nocks,
" Nor like your capons serve your cocks."

By her usual arrogance of assumption, Mrs. More (for this work is the production of an host)

attempts to blind the public as to her conduct to Mrs. Cowley and Mrs. Yearsley. The public has not yet forgot either, these affairs are known. H. More is proved a plagiary; she has allowed it, she dare not, because she cannot, deny it. It is no difficult matter to publish anonymously, and to tell lies in "private accusations," stage whispers, or anonymous publications, or by some "fool-"ish foster-father mother," as has been her constant practice through life. This is her defence with the public; let the public judge it. Mrs. More thinks that by having *lain by*, now *lain in* (though this illegitimate bantling is not yet owned) for eight months, by the various babbling of her followers, the original question will be lost and forgot in digressions. No! the ghost of "secret accu-"sations," the assassination of characters, shall haunt her night and day as long as she lives. I would advise the injured and oppressed Mr. Bere to this, to pursue *her*, and *her* only; for perhaps there has not appeared, for a series of years, so artful, so cunning a person, that can *secretly* atchieve so much mischief, & under the "vizor of superior "sanctity." He should keep, if he thinks it worth while to say any thing more, to "secret accusa-"tions," plagiarism, extravagancies, fanaticism, the ruin of those who are in the way of her GRAND-SCHEME and PROJECT of puritanizing the church. H More knows her strength lies in casting prose into verse, stealing the works of others, cunningly and secretly wounding, when she cannot stab her

opponents, without the least courage or candour to come forward before that public who befriended her, and on which she has so long and so shamefully imposed. I hesitate not to say, that Hannah More's religion is craft. It is to her no rule of conduct. It did not restrain her from injuring Mrs. Cowley. It did not curb her tyranny over Mrs. Yearsley, whose genius is far superior to her own. It did not tell her, when she humbled herself on account of her circumstances (which caused the only difference, for she was as well born as herself) at her feet, from insulting and calumniating Mrs. Yearsley; it did not tell her, "*thou* "*shalt not steal,*" when she refused to return her MS. of poetry; but it permitted her to tell the falsehood, "*I have burnt them!*" H. More has in this act reduced herself to the situation of a barbarous Goth and Vandal, or a common thief. That she had the poems in her custody, she does not deny, for she says she "has burnt them;" if she burnt poems, the productions of a person of whom she writes to Mrs. Montague in the following strains, she is a barbarian, whose mind is corroded by the meanest and basest envy; if she has not burnt them, she is a thief, for it is clear, they have not been returned. She kept them for her own use, to alter, garble, and publish in another form.*

* As she has made of Sir Abraham, a "very Abram," even so, in like manner, as the minor poet has "damned himself" in verse, will *she* now "damn "him," in prose. Then he will be "*doubly damned.*"

" A copy of verses was shewn me, said to be written by " a poor illiterate woman, in this neighbourhood, who sells " milk from door to door. The story did not engage my " faith, but the verses excited my attention; for though in- " correct, they breathed the genuine spirit of poetry, and " were rendered still more interesting, by a certain natural " and strong expression of misery, which seemed to fill the " heart and mind of the author.

" When I went to see her, I observed a perfect simpli- " city of manners, without the least affectation or preten- " sion of any kind: (this cannot be said of Mrs. H. More, " for she is all cunning and artfulness) she neither attempted " to raise my compassion by her distress, nor my admira- " tion by her parts. On a more familiar acquaintance, I " have reason to be surprized at the justness of her taste. " The study of the sacred scriptures has enlarged her ima- " gination and ennobled her language.

" You will find her, like all unlettered poets, abounding " in imagery, metaphor, and personification; her faults, " in this respect, being rather those of superfluity than of " want. If her epithets are now and then bold and vehe- " ment, they are striking and original; and I should be " sorry to see the wild vigour of her rustic muse polished " into elegance, or laboured into correctness. Her ear is " perfect; (that is not Hannah's case, for she has many " false rhymes) there is sometimes great felicity in the " structure of her blank verse, and she often varies the " pause, with a happiness which looks like skill."

But because this woman had a soul and a genius, which H. More confessedly wants, and because that she had acquired a little consequence from being useful to her in the subscription, as she would not submit to her abuse and tyranny, she must, in her usual low way, be calumniated. H. More has been uniform in her conduct thro'

life; those who will not flatter her she will ruin, if possible, and by wearing a religious cloak, with her exquisite refinements in artfulness and trick, she renders the evil deeds consequent to her ingenious malice so incredible, that the world is made to believe they "arise from the ground," for it is impossible that H. More, who is so "excellent," would descend to "secret accusations, "lies, or calumny;" and yet private accusations, lies, and calumny are proved against her. She will not defend any thing; but she will pluck the rumps of others to "foolish foster-father-mo-"ther" any action or conduct of hers.

"Thus Candour's maxims flow from Rancour's throat,
"As Devils, to serve their purpose, scripture quote."

The most fortunate circumstance in Mrs. More's life was the purchase of the annuity of 200l. a year so cheaply, which enabled her to run up and down after great folks, and carry incense. She even flatters the vices of the great to their faces. Had it not been for this income, and her share of 5000l. which was made by the school in Park-Street, and which being invested in 3 per cent. cons. during the American war (which war also H. defended) when sold out in 1785, doubled itself; had it not been for these advantages, H. More would now be poorer than Mrs. Yearsley; and from her temper, and disposition to calumny, would have been, as now she is very generally, and as she soon will be universally, execrated.—Put on a robe of sanctity, and stab in the dark.

" With that smooth falsehood, whose appearance charms,
" And reason of each wholesome doubt disarms,
" Which to the lowest guilt of guile descends,
" By vilest means pursues the vilest ends;
" With that malignant envy, which turns pale
" And sickens even if a friend prevail."

I have seen Mrs. Yearsley, I have seen Mrs. More; and the works of each I have now read. But although the evil deeds of H. More, deeds of which the low and uneducated are scarcely ever guilty, might excite a strong prejudice, on account of the mask under which they are perpetrated, against her; and though at other times I may express an honest indignation against her cruelty to individuals, and her profanation of religion, under whose guise she always so acts, I declare, that in matters of literature I will do her justice, always granting to her *abilities*, but no *genius*, much diligence and application, but no *originality*; and I pronounce Mrs. Yearsley a woman of *original genius*, and H. More a woman of *great diligence* and *ability*.* This I am certain is their literary character. But it is the mental character, the complexion of the heart, the dignity of soul, that distinguishes the individual. All H. More's opponents, and she has had quarrels enough in her time, candidly and honourably, when they found it necessary, and discovered what sort of adver-

* Not a line that thrilled my soul did I meet with in Hannah's works; yet I felt horror at several; as I do at her conduct, when I read her history, or listen to the recital of her unworthy actions. But when I take up Mrs. Yearsley's poems, I scarcely read a page but my soul is moved.

sary they had to deal with, appealed to the world, and justified themselves; instead of which, Mrs. More retired, affected illness during the storm, "added more accusations and calumnies," or wrote anonymously, or stung some of her dupes with nettles, to "come out," with or without a name, to combat for her.

"By vilest means pursues the vilest ends."

Of the INFLEXIBLE CAPTIVE, nothing more can be said, but that some good sentiments are expressed in strong and appropriate language.—There is nothing dramatic; for it is only a dialogue, without catastrophe.

FATAL FALSEHOOD was performed at Covent-Garden theatre, three nights, to which she herself wrote a prologue, and Mr. Sheridan the epilogue. Mr. Garrick wrote a prologue to Percy, which was acted at Drury-Lane several nights—Mr. Garrick wrote the epilogue also. Percy was inscribed to Earl Percy; Fatal Falsehood to the Countess Bathurst. The Inflexible Captive, which was inscribed to the Hon. Mrs. Boscawen, was performed at Bath a few times. The prologue was written by Dr. Langhorne, and the epilogue by Mr. Garrick.

The character of these tragedies is, that they are calculated only to excite horror, and often disgust.

The following is a specimen of the language and sentiments in Fatal Falsehood.

"Dost thou not know that fear is worse than grief?
"There may be bounds to grief, fear knows no bounds;

" In grief we know the worst of what we feel,
" But who can tell the end of what we fear?
" Grief mourns some sorrow palpable and known,
" But fear runs wild with horrible conjecture."
" I'll teach thee how to bear it; I'll grow proud,
" As gentle spirits still are apt to do
" When cruel slight or killing scorn assails them.
" Come, virgin dignity, come, female pride,
" Come, wounded modesty, come, slighted love,
" Come, conscious worth, come, too, O black despair!"
" This compound of strange contradicting parts,
" Too flexible for virtue, yet too virtuous
" To make a flourishing, successful villain.
" Conscience! be still; preach not remorse to me;
" Remorse is for the luckless, failing villain.
" He who succeeds repents not; penitence
" Is but another name for ill success.
" Was Nero penitent when Rome was burnt?
" No: but had Nero been a petty villain,
" Subject to laws and liable to fear,
" Nero perchance had been a penitent.
" He comes:—This paper makes him all my own."
" Oh for a flinty heart that knows no weakness,
" But moves right onward, unseduc'd by friendship,
" And all the weak affections!"
" This giant sin, whose bulk so lately scar'd me,
" Shrinks to a common size; I now embrace
" What I but lately fear'd to look upon.
" Why, what a progress have I made in guilt!
" Where is the hideous form it lately wore?
" It grows familiar to me; I can think,
" Contrive, and calmly meditate on mischief,
" Talk temp'rately of sin, and cherish crimes
" I lately so abhorr'd, that had they once
" But glanc'd upon the surface of my fancy
" I had been terrified. Oh wayward conscience!
" Too tender for repose, too sear'd for safety!"

" Draw thy dun curtain round, oh, night! black night!
" Inspirer and concealer of foul crimes!
" Thou wizard night! who conjur'st up dark thoughts;
" And mak'st him bold who else wou'd start at guilt!
" Beneath thy veil the villain dares to act
" What in broad day he wou'd not dare to think.
" Oh, night! thou hid'st the dagger's point from men,
" But cans't thou screen the assassin from himself?
" Shut out the eye of heaven? extinguish conscience?
" Or heal the wounds of honour? Oh, no, no, no!"

" One crime makes many needful: this day's sin
" Blots out a life of virtue."

From the Inflexible Captive.

" Let honour be the spring of all our actions,
" Not interest, fathers. Let no selfish views
" Preach safety at the price of truth and justice."

" In laurels or in chains
" 'Tis the same principle; the same fix'd soul,
" Unmov'd itself, tho' circumstances change.
" The native vigour of the free-born mind,
" Still struggles with, still conquers adverse fortune;
" Soars above chains, invincible tho' vanquish'd."

" Misjudging youth! learn, that like *other* men,
" I shun the *evil*, and I seek the *good*;
" But *that* I find in *guilt*, and *this* in *virtue*."

" I have no need of *oracles*, my son;
" *Honour's* the oracle of honest men."

" We live on honour—'tis our food, our life,
" The motive, and the measure of our deeds!
" We look on death as on a common object;
" The tongue nor faulters, nor the cheek turns pale,
" Nor the calm eye is moved at sight of him
" We court, and we embrace him undismay'd;
" We smile at tortures if they lead to glory,
" And only cowardice and guilt appal us."

I have almost always disliked novels and all imagined characters, and no work affords greater instruction than real history and actual biography. The dialogue of comedy gives me some pleasure, but real dialogue more. That between Mrs. More and Mrs. Yearsley, being true, much gratified me; and I clearly perceive that Mrs. Yearsley, unless it be a little defect in the art of grammar, was by far the superior woman. That she is in dignity of mind is evident; that she is so in integrity admits of no question. No poem of H. More's exhibits so much genius, or of the true poetical spirit, as Mrs. Yearsley's Soliloquy and Sensibility. The one is an original genius; the other, Mrs. More, has *acquired abilities*, by much application and study.—Let the poem of each on Sensibility be compared.

Having finished what I had to say on Mrs. More, as a poet, I will now conclude, by quoting the superior judgment of my relation, Peter Pindar, Esq. one of the first critics of the day, to confirm and justify the opinion I have uniformly given of her merits.

" Miss Hannah may be aptly term'd a hen,
" Who sits on pheasant's eggs, to kindness prone,
" Hatches the birds, a pretty brood; but then,
" Weak vanity! she calls the chicks her own.

" Lo, for the laurel prize Miss Hannah starts!
" But Nature to Miss Hannah's heels unkind,
" The hopes of honour and of glory thwarts!
" Left is Miss Hannah far, yes, far behind.

" Miss Hannah's heels are greasy, let me say;
" Miss Hannah's heels are very stiff *indeed:*
" Her form is rather fitted for the *dray,*
" Than on NEWMARKET turf to shew a speed."

VOL. IV.

IN the History of Mr. FANTOM she endeavours to ridicule and render philosophy contemptible. She does not give him a uniform bad character; she allows him some excellencies, but these excellencies she makes vices. *Narrowness of mind, ignorance, bigotry, priestcraft, public good,* the *love of mankind,* and, strange to tell, *benevolence,* are all equally vices. She describes Fantom as " desirous of seeing himself at the " head of a society of his own formation and pro- " selytism; the supreme object of a philosopher's " ambition!" This character is well illustrated, indeed, in her own conduct of Sunday-schools. — Whatever Fantom began with, he was sure in his conversation to end with a " pert squib at the bi- " ble, a vapid jest on the clergy, the miseries of " superstition, and the blessings of philosophy." Whatever mischief false notions of political philosophy may have done, the lamentable effects of superstition in all ages of the world have been grievously felt; and the direful effects of Mrs. More's late proceedings at Blagdon, and elsewhere, her underhand and subtle means to propagate and maintain a non-descript system of fa-

natical mysticism, are a proof that this story was written with some view.

I will not do her the injustice to say that she appears to have no regard for religion. On the contrary, she makes great professions; but her religion, if in reality she has any, is far from rational; it is not the religion of the bible. She is a woman of understanding and knowledge; and, therefore, there is room to suspect, that, on account of her subtle, pragmatical character, religion in her is craft and cunning, otherwise, with her information, her religion would appear more rational, and therefore more scriptural.

Under the character of Trueman, she has a quarrel with NATURE, which he personified. But is not God personified in the scriptures and in our daily speech? Although his necessary existence excludes all relation to one place more than another, and that he is equally present every where, still that and every other attribute, except his moral, are altogether incomprehensible to us; and our personification of nature, or of God, is because our faculties are too imperfect and finite to conceive or reason concerning the Supreme Being. From our daily and constant observation, and the latest improvements in natural knowledge, we are convinced that the energy and power constantly and regularly exerted in every part of the universe, is necessary for the support and cohesion of the parts of matter, and that this energy, this law of matter, this law of the universe, this law of nature, is God, in the heavens above, and in the earth

beneath, in all imaginable worlds, and in all imaginable space. In this kind of reasoning, the mind of man, from obvious and manifest appearances, rests perfectly satisfied in that one conscious, intelligent nature, which pervades the entire system. This view of this amazing attribute, instead of being a point of mere speculation, is, indeed, one of the most pleasing and useful thoughts that can enter the soul of man. The scriptures, indeed, represent him as dwelling in heaven, preparing his throne, and displaying his glory, but these expressions do not mean that his presence is confined to any one place, for that is impossible; and they relate only to particular emanations of his glory.

What can we learn concerning God, but his attributes? Is it possible for us, finite beings, to comprehend or conceive any idea of God or his existence. We see him in his works only and his providence. Nature and God are synonymous terms. "Doth not nature herself teach," said the Apostle, "Behold I go forward, but he is not "there; and backward, but I cannot perceive "him: on the left hand where he doth work, but "I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the "right hand that I cannot see him." We cannot conceive of the Deity without personification, and though the bible ascribeth to him eyes, hands, &c. on account of the imperfection not only of human language, but of the human intellect, it is inconsistent with genuine piety to consider the Deity as stationary or local, for he is every where,

by any personification. But Hannah has a quarrel with nature, for nature, some time or other, seems to have led her a merry dance, and played her some tricks.

This convenient and polite Mr. Fantom, who says any thing she bids him, as obediently as any of her nine parsons, proposes to "do away all the "religions, and put an end to all the wars in the "world." In this part of her story, she has not shewn much ingenious invention; for the termination of war, which would be a loss to Hannah, is no natural consequence of the extinction of religion. If Mr. Fantom could put an end to war, he certainly would be the best friend of mankind the world ever yet saw; but that we do not expect, nor do we think non-descriptism will accelerate the advent of that blessed day. The lady's Somerset disciples, by her direction, promise war at Blagdon, for at least ten years to come.

Mr. Trueman, however, whom she makes her favourite character, proposeth to re-christianize the world. This event is devoutly to be wished for, but will system-mongers suffer that to be done? Will Hannah herself give her vote for the abolition of the athanasian creed to begin with? No! for the neglect of reading it was an heinous offence in Mr. Bere. Will she agree that the scriptures only shall be the rule of faith, without enforcing by pains and penalties, a human construction and addition? Among all the reforms she has not forgot the human heart. The part she acted

in the Blagdon Controversy, is a strong proof how necessary this reform is at Cowslip-Green and its neighbourhood; and the proposal is a lamentable proof how much easier it is for the lady to preach, than to practise.

Every excellence is to be met with in the character of Trueman, and almost every vice in that of Fantom the philosopher. Philosopher here, is a misnomer; and every effort is made, in the true bloody spirit, and in the spirit of the time when she wrote that execrable performance (a performance calculated to continue those measures pretended to be the salvation of the country; but in reality, as all wise men foresaw, its ruin) to assist in deluging the world with blood, by rendering philosophy, which in spite of all that can be said to the contrary, has done as much to civilize mankind as christianity herself, disreputable, and in its stead, to superinduce an age of darkness and superstition; to renew scenes similar to those in France, not indeed in the name of philosophy and rights of man, or of woman, but in the "name of "the Lord," the "grand-scheme," the "pure gos-"pel." The same spirit, in the same infuriate heart, would soon light the faggot in Smithfield, had not the spirit of *genuine* philosophy enlightened this land, and law protected the establishment, and a legal toleration sheltered those who ingenuously dissent from the church. In this piece, there is more art and subtlety than can be seen with half an eye. It is an effort to restore the reign of superstí-

tion and fanaticism, in the room of that liberal and tolerant system now established, by puritanizing the church, and discountenancing every member of an ingenious and inquisitive turn of mind; first to ruin their reputation, and then to eject them. But the best reformed system of christianity and true philosophy, exist together in this country, and they will scorn the assistance of such a miserable perversion of philosophy and truth as Mrs. Hannah More describes, whatever religiously sick minds may say or do in favour of her nostrums. She will, it is hoped, impose but on few; for it is not a religion of love, of expansive embrace, comprehending the human race, proclaiming the "goodness of living together in unity," but a religion of hatred and persecution to all who differ from herself, and utterly repugnant to the attributes of God, that she teaches. Her own written works, and her late conduct at Blagdon and elsewhere, sufficiently demonstrate this. She is now, however, detected as an enemy, not only to individuals among the clergy, but, notwithstanding her smiles and unction, to the whole order. I ask, if she had succeeded in ejecting Mr. Bere from his living, as well as his curacy, would she and her supporters have rested there? Would the rest of the clergy have any thing to apprehend? I speak not at random, I have proof of what I write.

Mrs. More makes Trueman repeat that beautiful and divine precept of our Lord, "love your "enemies; do good to them that hate you;" "if

" thine enemy hunger, feed him," &c. &c. And yet, in real life, she who is so exclusively holy, acts in direct opposition to these commands in the character of Trueman, towards Mr. Bere, supposing him to be the philosopher; for she meanly, wickedly, and clandestinely endeavoured, with the assistance of all she could get to join with her, to deprive the Curate of Blagdon, aged and infirm, of every possible means of existence, by stripping him of his gown, and depriving him of his benefice. Of this the proof ought not to be brought forward in books, but in a court of law. *Hanc tu Romane caveto.* She, at last, gets Fantom's man servant hanged, and blames the French philosophy for it; as if executions had not been more frequent in England before and since the French revolution, in the proportion of two to one, than in France, though the population of France be more than twice that of England. But the venal hireling was paid for it. And what have we got by the war? Three hundred million more debt, the blood of two or three hundred thousand shed, and an island or two in India; and a military republic established and acknowledged in the heart of Europe.

In the History of the Two Wealthy Farmers, I thought as I proceeded I should have but little to observe, the object seemed so excellent, and the stile appropriate. O! si sic omnia! He who has enjoyed the comforts and felt any of the evils of life, entertained the expectations of hope, the confidence conscious virtue inspires, experienced the

delights of walking with God, and can appeal to him for the rectitude of his intentions, and the purity of his means, whose highest object and aim were to be honest rather than rich, who has observed and meditated on the ways of God with man, may here revel in religious and intellectual pleasure. But I had not advanced very far, before I observed, with all this ardent piety and enflamed devotion, this apparently genuine spirit of christianity, such shrewd, "*knowing*" intelligence, such acquaintance with the deformities and depravities of the human mind and heart, as appeared to me inconsistent with the innocent speculations of a female mind, and such as would have indicated rather a disposition capable of entertaining the uncharitable opinions, the artful subtlety, and the shrewd cunning which she has manifested on different occasions in private life, than that mild disposition, that christian charity, that gentle and humble spirit, which she so zealously inculcates. If her conduct to individuals, a conduct that would disgrace a fairer fame, and depreciate excellence superior to her talents, could be forgot, the enjoyment and profit of her reader would be greater. When he reads (p. 66, vol. 4) "He had that "sort of sense, which good men call cunning, "and knaves call wisdom. He was too prudent "ever to do any thing so wrong that the law could "take hold of him; yet he was not over scrupu-"lous about the morality of an action when the "prospect of enriching himself by it was very

" great, and the chance of hurting his character " was small;" he who can forget secret accusations against Mr. Bere, literary robbery from Mrs. Cowley and Mrs. Yearsley, her secret calumny against the latter, by her letters to London, who can read p. 72, and not consider her as vain, ambitious, violent, and high-minded.

In p. 76, at the imaginary school where the Miss Bragwells were educated, " Religion was " not learned, because christianity was an edu- " cation fit to be taught at charity-schools," it is intended to praise themselves and their own seminary, at the expence of others. But if they taught so much and so refined a system of the gospel, and such pure morality, they have not been very successful in the impressions they made on the late Mrs. Robinson, alias Perdita, who in her life written by herself, and lately published, tells us, she had her instruction from them, and with the other young ladies, attended the Miss Mores to the theatre. But in H. More's mind, many revolutions, counter-revolutions, progressions, and retrogradations have taken place since those days, and her present state of mind and principles. are not yet fixed, they being indeed, non-descript. God give her grace to repent, with a repentanee not to be repented of.

Upon the subject of the Farmers, let me transcribe a few sentences, to contrast with the lady's prose sentiments, and secret accusations in private letters and otherwise.

" Goodness is not a single act to be done; so that a man " can say, I have atchieved it, and the thing is over; but it " is a habit that is constantly to be maintained; it is a con- " tinual struggle with the opposite vice."

This is all very well. But the scriptures are misunderstood in the following sentences.

" The change the Gospel requires is of quite another " cast: it is having 'a new heart and a right spirit;' it is " being 'God's workmanship;' it is being 'created anew " in Christ Jesus unto good works;' it is becoming 'new " creatures;' it is 'old things being done away, and all " things made new;' it is by so 'learning the truth as " it is in Jesus;' to the 'putting off the old man, and " putting on the new, which after God is created in righ- " teousness and true holiness;' it is by 'partaking of the " divine nature.' These," she says, " are not her words, " nor words picked out of any fanatical book; they are " the words of that Gospel you profess to believe; it is not " a new doctrine, it is as old as our religion itself. Though " I cannot but observe, that men are more reluctant in be- " lieving, more averse to adopting this doctrine, than al- " most any other: and indeed I do not wonder at it; for " there is perhaps no one which so attacks corruption in " its strong holds; no one which so thoroughly prohibits " a lazy Christian from uniting a life of sinful indulgence " with an outward profession of piety."

Mrs. Inkle, one of her characters, is taught to say—

" To cheat the weary hours, I looked about for some " books, and found, among a few others of the same cast, " *Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul.* " But all those sort of books were addressed to *sinners;* " now as I knew I was not a sinner, I threw them away " in disgust. Indeed they were ill-suited to a taste formed " by plays and novels, to which reading I chiefly trace my " ruin; for, vain as I was, I should never have been guilty

" of so wild a step as to run away, had not my heart been " tainted and my imagination inflamed by those pernicious " books."

Reader! dost thou not shudder at reading this passage, when thou recollectest that one volume of her works consists of plays or tragedies, that she has republished them lately! I leave it to you to say what sort of a woman she is, when you have thought of *all her actions!*

In page 282, she makes Mrs. Inkle say—

" O! it is an awful thing to think what a sinner man " or woman may be, and yet retain a decent character."

No man who did not recollect Mrs. Cowley and Mrs. Yearsley's treatment, could think it possible, H. More, bearing so decent a character, could be so wickedly mean as to write to a Bishop secret accusations against one clergyman, and to her " old friend," that another had published a political pamphlet of evil tendency, when she had no proof of the one or the other.

'Tis all for the best, is a pious story, which merits my approbation. My chief objection to my author is, her practice regularly giving the lye to her professions. In p. 305, the expression, " This we thought a *fortunate circumstance,*" is improper and unscriptural in so serious a work. But I have seen a letter of Mrs. More's, this pretended enemy to French philosophy, inviting friends to *her* " *civic feast,*" and *grand saturnalia,* containing the words *unlucky* and *misfortune,* and in which she said, " *something must be sacrificed* " *to* ' *liberty and equality.*"

The observance of the Sabbath is spoken of with much strictness and reverence; but though she enumerates many things which are done on Sunday, which she says ought not to be done, she forgot to prohibit armies and fleets to fight, mackarel to be sold, and dinners cooked on the Lord's day. Her accusations of Mr. Bere, I believe, were dated on Sunday! H. More is not yet but half a saint.

Mrs. Simpson, one of the characters in this story, is taught by our author to say—

"I not only forgive him heartily, but I remember him in "my prayers, as one of those instruments with which it "has pleased God to work for my good. Oh! never put "off forgiveness to a dying bed! When people come to "die, we often see how the conscience is troubled with "sins, of which before they hardly felt the existence.— "How ready are they to make restitution of ill-gotten "gain; and this perhaps for two reasons; from a feeling "conviction that it can be of no use to them where they "are going, as well as from a near view of their own re- "sponsibility. We also hear from the most hardened, of "death-bed forgiveness of enemies. Even malefactors at "Tyburn forgive. But why must we wait for a dying bed "to do what ought to be done now? Believe me, that "scene will be so full of terror and amazement to the soul, "that we had not need load it with unnecessary business."

Instead of seeking for a christian reconciliation with the Curate of Blagdon, whom she has so much injured, and apologizing to the public and the neighbourhood of Cowslip-Green, for the disturbance and division she has created, the lady is still indefatigable, using influence and solicitation with all she can get at, or by any means move to

publish advertisements in newspapers, to "make "a liar of Mr. Bere" (her own words) and to calumniate every man who countenanced or befriended the Curate, when it was in *equilibrio* whether he should literally go a begging, or come on his parish. All this will be proved whenever Mrs. More *dares publicly* to call for it, and perhaps without any solicitation on her part.

A CURE FOR MELANCHOLY, a story in which employment, *something to do*, is recommended as the best prescription for preserving health of body and mind, and various means of doing good are pointed out. Alas! Alas! the ghost of "secret "accusations against one clergyman," and "mali- "cious lies" invented and propagated against another, as I am most credibly informed, which help, with some charitable deeds and religious writings to fill up her time, will as long as she lives haunt her mind, and furnish me with an eternal sarcasm whenever her name is mentioned. All would be well done, if she had not been afflicted with an incurable maliciousness against all who happen to cross her paths, and sometimes, unaccountably, against some who have had no opportunity or inclination of giving her any sort of offence.

Under this head working schools are recommended, and plans sketched out, as conducted by Mrs. Jones, an imaginary character. These I think must be useful, if well governed.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS have existed now near 20 years, and were first introduced by Mr. Raikes,

of Glocester. Pious persons, or persons professing to be pious, in different parts of the country, not only encouraged these institutions in their own parishes and neighbourhood, but in some instances took upon themselves the charge of disseminating the knowledge of them, and establishing them in distant parishes, using every means possible to plant schools in all populous neighbourhoods. Of this description is Mrs. H. More, who has laboured with great assiduity to extend Sunday schools far and wide. Here I will attend only to her own account of the institution and government of these schools under this title, deferring my opinion of their utility until I come to notice them under the article of the Blagdon controversy.

Mrs. More then says—

"She would not discourage them, even from views of "mere worldly policy; that it is something gained to res-"cue children from idling away their Sabbath in the fields "or streets; it is no small thing to keep them from those "tricks to which a day of leisure tempts the idle and the "ignorant; it is something for them to be taught to read, "to read the bible, and to be carried regularly to church. "But all this is not enough. To bring them to answer "their highest end can only be effected by God's blessing "on the best directed means, the choice of able teachers, "and a diligent attention in some pious gentry to visit and "inspect the schools."

To all this I cordially agree, if education cannot be had otherwise, which if they do not, must be the people's own fault, or that of their rulers; for in that part of his Majesty's dominions where

my estate lies, we have parochial schools, to which the poor are easily admitted, established by the legislature. The requisites, we are told, for a well qualified master or mistress, are *good sense*, *activity*, and *piety*. All this is very well so far.—The cheap repository is mentioned, as sending forth a great variety of little tracts suited to the young, and to counteract the influx of jacobinical and atheistical pamphlets. I declare, I never met with such books in this country!

The incident of a group (p. 384) of young females listening to a blind fidler, is here said to have suggested the idea of instructing *adults* also at the Sunday schools, in the evenings, after the business of the dairy and serving the cattle is over, where the scriptures are to be explained, and even the *parents* to be admitted, that they may learn how to instruct and expound to their own families.

The PILGRIMS, is an attempt at an allegorical description of human life; but it is very inferior to that of John Bunyan. It is, for it could not be otherwise, a pious performance, and may be useful; neither is it my inclination or wish, to refuse my full approbation to whatever has a tendency to improve morals, to afford instruction, or to edify in religious principles. Here no peculiar eccentricities appear.

The VALLEY OF TEARS, is another allegory on human life, founded on a paper in Addison's Spectator, in the execution of which, if there be not much to commend, as its object is religious, I find little to censure.

The NEGRO SLAVE TRADE is here introduced; and great praise is bestowed on the *minority on that question* in the House of Commons, and their determined perseverance, in renewing their applications and exertions for attaining their end. No mention, however, is made of white, olive, or copper-coloured slaves; nor any approbation expressed of that French Convention, which, as by one acclamation, decreed the whole race free. Notwithstanding all the horrors which accompanied a period of the revolution, philanthropy almost tempts me to say, I hope not indiscreetly, now we have a peace, that one godlike act in the eye of justice, remunerates, and will remunerate them for their losses and sufferings, and that the conduct of that assembly of atheists, as Hannah and many others in this country, called them, does, in that respect, disgrace that of our British *christian* senate. Upon these, and such questions, Wm. Pitt knew that it was safe to vote for their emancipation, because the dealers in black men were powerful in the house, and that he should see himself agreeably left in a minority, and by that manœuvre preserve his popularity, and, on that subject, the good opinion of both parties.

I heartily agree with Mrs. More, when she says, vol. 4, p. 433, that

"It was a melancholy sight to see multitudes of travel-
"lers (the journey of life) heedlessly pacing on, boasting
"they had light enough of their own, and despising the
"offer of more. But what astonished me most of all was,
"to see many, and some of them too accounted men of
"first rate wit, actually busy in blowing out their own

" light (conscience) because while any spark of it remained,
" it only served to torment them, and point out things which
" they did not wish to see. And having once blown out
" their own light, they were not easy till they had blown
" out that of their neighbours also; so that a good part of
" the wilderness seemed to exhibit a sort of universal *blind-*
" *man's buff*, each endeavouring to catch his neighbour,
" while his own voluntary blindness exposed him to be
" caught himself; so that each was actually falling into
" the snare he was laying for another, till at length, as
" selfishness is the natural consequence of blindness, ' *catch*
" *he that catch can*,' became the general motto of the
" wilderness."

The lady clearly illustrates this phenomenon in the human character, by her own conduct in proselytism, and as a person of some " *wit*," " *actually* " *busied*" *in blowing out her own light*, that she may not see by its internal reflection the heinousness of her " evil deeds," viz. accusing the brethren in private letters, secret accusations, defamation, evil and scandalous reports. She is now literally playing " blind-man's buff," to save some remains of her *holiness*, and privately hires men of servile minds publicly to vouch for her, she herself lurking behind the scene; so that she has fallen into the snare she was laying for others, by her " *catch* " *he that catch can*." And as Sir A. expressed it, " reports are abroad" that her mind now torments her, her conscience being roused, and that she has been seen, like a tragedy queen (acting perhaps one of the female characters in her own plays) tearing her shawl in a paroxysm of rage, and trampling it under her foot. Be that as it may, I pray her conscience may turn her the right

way, that she may " rend her heart and not her " garment."

" Now I saw (ibidem) that there were some others who " were busy in strewing the most gaudy flowers over the " numerous bogs, and precipices, and pit-falls, with which " the wilderness abounded; and thus making danger and death " look so gay, that poor thoughtless creatures seemed to delight " in their own destruction. Those pit-falls did not appear " deep or dangerous to the eye, because over them were raised " gay edifices (the theatre and opera: with as great propriety " might any actress or opera girl preach and write against " plays as H. More) with alluring names. These were " filled with singing men and singing women, and with " dancing, and feasting, and gaming, and drinking, and " jollity, and madness. But though the scenery was gay, " the footing was unsound. The floors were full of holes, " through which the unthinking merry-makers were con- " tinually sinking. Some tumbled through in the middle " of a song; more at the end of a feast; and though there " was many a cup of intoxication wreathed round with " flowers, yet there was always poison at the bottom."

Reader! " what need have you of more wit- " nesses?" H. More, who thus preaches against theatrical amusements and pleasures, has, in the 3d vol. of her works, published several plays, that could not be acted without the accompaniments she here reprobates. She herself, formerly, viewed and directed the scenery, the actions, and partook of the " voluptuousness" she describes, when her plays were acted at Drury-Lane, Covent-Garden, and Bath; and to the representation of which, and of other less chaste plays, their scholars, young ladies, were led by her and her sisters. She sells poison from one part of her shop, and an antidote

from the other. What are we to conclude from all this bustle of writing and publishing plays, and poems, and songs, and censure, and sermons against plays, and a vindication of the innocence of the drama, but that it is all for money, for fame! She may use the motto on an old book stall, "To "BE SOLD—"BOOKS of DIVINITY and BOOKS of "DIVERSION!!"

In her continuation of the allegory of human life, the lady has had another vision she says, and on that account, and for many other reasons, she certainly merits the title of *visionary*, which she calls the "STRAIGHT GATE and the BROAD WAY." Through this world, her "LAND of MISERY," two ways lay leading, but must pass through a "DARK "SHADOWY VALLEY," to the "HAPPY LAND;" the one the BROAD, TEMPTING WAY, the other the NARROW WAY. The *map and road book*, are the holy scriptures. The BEACONS and LIGHT HOUSES, are the teachers of religion. The narrow road was difficult and *rough*, but infallibly safe; medio tutissimus ibis, and had its comforts and pleasures. The broad way was tempting, with gaudy flowers and luxurious fruits. The travellers this way, she says, write books and plays (as she has done) and paint and sing, and dance and drink, as they go along, and seem remarkably fond of red sheep, and Eldorado pebbles, with which, and flowers, they so load themselves, when they can scramble enough of them, that they can scarcely move forwards. On this road, she tells us, are a great many MEN-traps, and spring-guns!!

She describes a party, of *neither hot nor cold*, who split a direction, trust in the Lord, and be doing good, i. e. pervert the scripture, and because they will be saved their own way, take the first clause, i. e. trust in the Lord, and elect themselves, and leave others to strive and perform good works. These self-elected, are described as often boasting of their own inward bright burning light, in order to get the praises of men. The piece ends with few entering in at the straight gate, and multitudes, the bulk of the human species, going in at the broad way to "everlasting chains and pe- "nal fire." She is much afraid of fat people entering in at the narrow gate, and thinks lean folks have a better chance. It reminds me of a good-natured, honest and worthy curate, who, though his salary was small, thrived so well on it, that by the "blessing of God," as he said, he was in as good a condition as if he had been a pluralist.— He told me, that one Sunday morning he rode into the country to do duty for a friend, and having an imperfect idea of the way, coming to a place where the road divided into two, the one wide and the other narrow, he enquired of a lank, black-haired, undertaker-looking man, whom he just then overtook, and afterwards learned was a methodist preacher, the way to St. Mary's; was answered, after stedfastly looking at him—"Sir, "the BROAD WAY is your road! the BROAD WAY, "Sir, the BROAD WAY!"

PARLEY THE PORTER, is another allegory, of the same complexion. A castle in a garden, in

the middle of a wilderness, is entrusted to servants. In the wilderness live a vast number of robbers, desirous of surprizing the castle, which was entrusted to his servants by their lord, who took a journey into a far country. The castle is the *soul* and *heart* of man. The robbers are the various passions and pleasures of life. The castle at last, like every lady and castle that is besieged, is taken. This is the least valuable of the whole.

VOL V.

THIS is a volume of stories, moral and religious; but the religion is frequently puritanical, and there is much cant. In these stories, whose general object is laudable, there is nothing more remarkable than the author's facility of producing them, and the address, if it be true, with which she has been able to sell them. But two causes explain this; she had the pay and assistance of administration; and it has lately been observed, that the body of the people is fast methodizing. To be just, however, I have sometimes met in them with some feelings of rational piety, which gave me delight; and I should feel still higher pleasure, did I not know that H. More's heart and writings are, alas! at variance.

When we consider the celebrity of her noisy piety, and the wide spread fame of her stewardship for men of charity, who have both the ability and inclination to bestow, every act of which has,

as by a " trumpet sound," been sent from post to post over the nation, and which by mistake has been solely ascribed to herself; when I reflect on what I have read, what I have read or know of her respecting Mrs. Cowley, Mrs. Yearsley, and Mr. Bere, and others who never gave her any provocation, I am tempted to compare her sentiments and writings with her conduct, her head with her heart, her speech with her behaviour, and to enquire, whether her reputation be real or factitious. Let then her acknowledged literary attainments, her professions of moral excellence, her avowed scrupulous integrity, her religious zeal, her mild demeanour, her devotional aspect, her ardent piety, and the numerous little almsdeeds of her stewardship, and the following quotations, be by the reader's judgment weighed against her " private accusations," her uncharitable surmises of the conduct and sentiments of others, her exclusion from life eternal of those who differ from her in opinion, her defamation, by inventing and propagating false reports of those with whom she is scarcely acquainted, her general censure of the ministers of religion, her wicked, subtle, artful, and secret plots to assassinate the reputation of the Curate of Blagdon, whom she maliciously purposed to deprive of his bread, and of the means of procuring it any where else, in which she has been detected, and of which she now stands convicted before the public, the punishment for which, from the laws of her country, she hitherto escaped only by her cun-

ning and the protection of friends to her designs; and then, according to his own sense of virtue and vice, apply the epithets of excellent or vile.

"For he never travelled on a Sunday without such a rea-
"son as he might be able to produce at the day of judg-
"ment." For though the 'SHEPHERD OF SALISBURY
"PLAIN' was so low in the world, this gentleman was not
"above entering very closely into his character, of which
"he thought he should be able to form a better judgment,
"by seeing whether his practice at home kept pace with his
"professions abroad: for it is not so much by observing
"how people talk, as how they live, that we ought to judge
"of their character." P. 33, 34, vol. 5.

There are frailties and peccadillos, alas! in all human characters; but the heart that is capable of devising a plot, and attempting to reduce to infamy and want the Curate of Blagdon, a gentleman of refined feelings and attic ideas, as the writer believes, and of strict and scrupulous integrity, whose soul would shudder at the thought of doing so base an act to any other person, united to an amiable partner by mutual affection and esteem; that heart, I say, has more of the flagitious female depicted in tragedy, than the amiable one on which H. More has surreptitiously seized and appropriated to herself. In short, she is a book-maker, and a methodistical preacher: preachers do not always practise, and authors, whose business it is only to write, think not themselves bound to act the character of their heroes.

"But the great gift, the mighty bribe,
"Which satan pours amid the tribe,
"Which millions seize with eager haste,
"And all desire at least to taste,

" Is—plodding reader! What d'ye think?
" Alas! 'tis money—money—chink!

In allegories, Mrs. More is by no means happy. The object is, however, apparently good, and criticism therefore loseth her sting. It is her conduct, her " secret malicious deeds," I would most severely censure; but these will all be reviewed at the GRAND ASSIZES, and " private malice," as well as private stealing, and " secret vanity of " mind," shall be punished by the Supreme Judge, at whose tribunal no culprit shall be favoured.

In this volume are some other stories and poor allegories, of little value. In the TWO SHOEMAKERS, the pious one is made to prosper in his worldly affairs, as she makes all the converted uniformly to get forwards, proving godliness, at least in this world, to be great gain; and the other, who was wicked, dies as he lived, unhappy.

The good shoemaker, James Stock, is, on a certain occasion, taught to say, " I must not pre- " tend to call myself a christian, if I do not requite " evil with good." Amiable H. More! so! the Curate of Blagdon admitted you to have a footing in his parish, and in obedience to this rule, you endeavoured he should foot it out of the parish, and you and your disciple take " his office!" Ergo, you are a non-descript christian! This is being Yorkshire indeed!

A long dialogue is carried on between the shoemaker Stock, and his man Will, in which Will, though not learned, displays his morality and christian belief; yet Stock tells him (vol. 5,

p. 194, 195) it is not enough, it is not *being a christian*, something is declared *to be wanting*; they reason long in a circle, to prove christianity is *something* not described; it is not *morality*, nor *virtue*, nor *doing good*, and the dialogue ends, Will being still in the dark, as to what "*vital*, "*genuine* christianity" is.

Songs, thought harmless, are here forbidden.

"Bring the flask, the music bring,
"Joy shall quickly find us,
"Drink and dance, and laugh and sing,
"And cast dull care behind us."

are "sensual and devilish," and inconsistent with the austerity of her system. I really think this song may be very innocently sung, much more so, than even mentioning "the famous ode of Horace." But Mrs. H. More is much more extensively read in obscenity than I am, for I never heard nor read the song she here mentions, as "*Which is the* "*best day to drink—Sunday, Monday, Tuesday,* "*Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday?*"

"Drink and drive care away,
"Drink and be merry;
"You will ne'er go the sooner
"To the stygian ferry."

And—"A plague on those musty old lubbers,
"Who teach us to fast and to think."

I have heard once or twice; but as my religion is "love," and "charity," so I like best a "love "song;" and *Lady Mac Sarcasm* tells me, she is not so fond of the "song of songs," as she hears Mrs. More is! Now, my lady says, Hannah is too

particular! She thinks her strange & non-descript; not that she understands or knows any thing about the "ode of Horace," but she likes a psalm tune at church, an Irish jig, a country dance, or a reel at home, and believes it all affectation in her. Last night we sung and played in the evening; called in the servants to prayers twenty minutes before supper, after which the carpet was removed, when a gentleman playing on his cremona some favourite reels, my girls (they are bonny lasses) danced like fairies! We all agreed (for Mrs. Hannah has lately, and not to her credit, been in every body's mouth) that our mirth was innocent, and protested we should scorn to be guilty of "secret accusations" against any honest man, which we neither durst nor could substantiate.

Mr. Stock, the shoemaker, asks Will—"Will, what would you think of any one who should sit down and write a book or a song to abuse the clergy?" I ask Mrs. H. More, what would she think of a man and woman, who should put their wicked heads together, to rob a parson of his good name and property, with a view to send him a begging?

Tom White the Postboy's history, comes next. Tom was originally good, then wicked, and became good again. This is, in her usual manner, "pious and good." It was written in the time of the late dearth, one of the causes of which was the wrath of God for our wickedness, in being so much addicted to wars. The *white* loaf, *rice* milk, *rice* pudding, are particularly no-

ticed, to display the author's skill in cooking; but she betrays a total ignorance of that art, whatever she may be in that of "secret accusa-"tions" and calumny. In confirmation of this remark, see her receipt, p. 275, vol. 5, to "*dine* "*well eight men, for seven-pence.*" Take half a pound of rice, two ounces of sugar, and boil in two quarts of skim milk! This would not be too much for one man. This is what her love of war and non-descriptism would reduce the labouring people to!

"Up to her godly garret after seven,
"There starve and pray, for that's the way to heaven."

We are now arrived at the famous HESTER WILMOT, being the 2d part of the SUNDAY SCHOOL. John Wilmot, a cottager, was a good-natured, ignorant, illiterate man, without any fixed principles, whose home was often uncomfortable by the noisy scolding temper of his wife Rebecca, an industrious, but over neat person. Hester was fourteen years old before she knew a letter; but being coaxed by little bribes to the Sunday school, just established, she soon learned to read the scriptures, and became a pious, religious girl. Having no comfort at home, poor Hester sought it at church, at school, and in her bible, and "*God* "*revealed himself to her,*" as a God of infinite goodness, power, justice, and holiness. The promise of "*renouncing the Devil and all his works,* "*the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and* "*all the sinful lusts of the flesh,*" distressed her, till she met with these words in her bible, "*My*

" *grace is sufficient for thee.*" Her own heart led her to assent to the humbling doctrine, " *We are* " *born in sin;*" and was relieved by hearing of " *that spiritual grace by which we have a new birth* " *unto righteousness.*"

The practice of turning away scholars because they are grown up is disapproved of; for young people want to be warned at sixteen years more than at six. Instructions are given on the Sunday evenings, called the *evening schools*. These evening instructions are represented to be soon considered not as a task, but as a disadvantage and discredit to those who absent themselves from them. Thus, by presents and insinuating manners, children and adults are gained over, and induced to attend these meetings late and early; for the institution is not confined to the instruction of children only. Hester by industry, diligence, good conduct, a renovated temper, sobriety and religion, becomes exemplary to her father and mother; and her mild conversation to him one day, on seeing him sober, when he was expected, according to custom, to be drunk, so affected the father, that walking out, he said to himself—

" Surely there must be something in religion, since it " can thus change the heart. Hester was once a pert girl, " and now she is as mild as a lamb. She was once an in- " dolent girl, and now she is up with the lark. She was " a vain girl, and would do any thing for a new ribbon; " and now she is contented to go in rags to a feast at which " every one else will have a new gown. She deprived her- " self of her gown to give me the money; and yet this

" very girl, so dutiful in some things, would submit to be " turned out of doors, rather than read a loose book at my " command, or break the Sabbath. I do not understand " this; there must be some mystery in it."

John and Rebecca are also converted.

I hope I shall never think, speak, nor write contemptuously or disrespectfully of any thing that relates to religion. Although this be a fictitious story, yet such reformations are maintained by these societies to have often been really true; and there are many of them related in Mr. Wesley's journals. Shall I say *there is nothing* in it, that it is *impossible*, that it is *false?* I will not, I dare not. He that revealed himself once, can again, and wonderfully deals with the hearts of men. For what purpose do we preach? To convert; that men may be led from evil to do good, and save their souls alive. But I cannot give credit to those conversions which happen by a sudden paroxysm, of which the patients talk with pride and confidence, as if they had been " out of the body," and of which they boast as if they had succeeded to a good estate, and still cherish, under much shew and cunning, an evil temper and disposition within. I think more highly of that renovation, which, as it is conducted by the spirit of God, is yet rational, decent, steady in good works, though not exempt from the infirmities of human nature. A higher perfection and purity than this is not attainable; whereas the instantaneous, momentary, convulsive conversion, which ensures its votary of eter-

nal life, I consider as a system, a system that may be learned. Persons, at some conventicles, are said to have been retained for the purpose of exhibiting these epileptic conversions, to attract attention, and encourage the craft of the schism.—These extravagancies are clearly proved to have been practised by Mrs. More's teachers, with or without her approbation and countenance; and this story of Hester Wilmot and others, are irrefragable arguments that she herself has received this system of puritanical conversions. The foundation is here; private instructions could be easily given.

If this sort of conversion be supernatural, I think it not unreasonable to conclude, that to a *natural* man, on reasonable principles, it is unintelligible; and that such a man cannot adequately even discourse on the subject. It is intelligible, and known only to those who have had experience of it, and are *really* and *truly* converted. Now as this is the work of God, and he is said to have manifested his grace in an especial manner to render them new creatures, holy, without spot or wrinkle, all those who are converted, are of course holy, new creatures, nor liable or likely to commit sins such as they before conversion were guilty of, or any crime of a flagrant nature. But Mrs. H. More having imagined and written this story, and others of a like nature, she must, if my reasoning be just, be herself converted; for, in a natural state, she could not understand nor discourse of these matters, therefore she is holy, and exempted

from those sins and frailties the unconverted are daily guilty of. But H. More has been proved, by the letters of the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and of Dr. Crossman, to be guilty of "secret "accusations," with a view to displace the Curate of Blagdon, and actually procured her own disciple to be nominated and licensed to that cure; and her name is put to the vol. 5, which contains this story of a conversion: Ergo Mrs. H. More is not herself yet converted, and this species of conversion is but a system.

There is one observation I must not omit to make in this place, and it is a fact I cannot and never could account for. I have uniformly remarked, that all those who adopt this system of non-descriptism, in or out of the church, have no charity for those without their own society. They not only do not love them, but they hate them, and when they dare or can, persecute them. It is for this "mark," I chiefly suspect their christianity. All religions hitherto have, being too frequently engines of states, had but little charity for the professors of different faiths, and there is no hope that it will ever be otherwise, until there is a universal religion, universally professed, i. e. rational christianity.

Let not my reader imagine, that I mean to ridicule this story of Hester Wilmot, or discourage any endeavours or attempts to reform the wicked. In any thing rationally pious, I would unite even with Mrs. More, to promote the good of man, provided there was no danger of fanaticism, or hy-

pocrisy and pride. But this story, pious and good as it may appear, and it really appears so, I consider, and not unreasonably, as the platform of the institution of "Sunday schools," the declared proximate object of which is not *children* only, but *adults* also, to puritanize the people, and its ultimate object is a revolution, or at least a schism, in the church. Reforms, however, should be gradual, not upon non-descript principles, but effected by the wisdom of those eminently learned and pious men, the prelates, the other dignitaries, with the assistance of others in inferior situations, sanctioned by the authority of the legislature, and not riotously forced upon us by the blind zeal and violence of a sect, whose principles are not yet known, and remarkable, rather for their cunning and hypocrisy, than their learning or love of truth. Its first fruits have shewn themselves at Blagdon, when the regular clergyman was literally dismissed with disgrace, and a follower of this system of H. More's actually licensed, and declared himself in possession. The regular curate was then *down*, and, in his person, the church of England. It puts me in mind of a story told by a man in a higher station, who, when some puritan (if I recollect it right) remarked, that the church had had a fall a century and a half ago, replied, yes! but this church has a trick of *getting up* again. This trick has been repeated in the person of Mr. Bere; he was re-instated, the Bishop's eyes being opened by the publications of the friends of the establishment; the *church was down*,

non-descripts *were uppermost*, but the church *rose up again*, and will, I hope, always continue to play them *this trick*.

The GRAND ASSIZES, is an allegorical description of the general judgment, in which I find nothing remarkable. The FAIR-WEATHER CHRISTIAN is another allegory. The temper of the Mac Sarcasm family compels me to make the following quotation :—" Difficulties unmask him " (the fair-weather christian) to others; tempta- " tions unmask him to himself; he discovers, that " though he is a *high professor*, he is *not a chris-* " *tian*." " Secret accusations!"

The ST. GILES's ORANGE GIRL is a good story, the idea of which seems to have been suggested by Dr. Colquhoun's " *Police of the city of London;*" and a short account is given of the Philanthropic Society, who pick up children in the streets, and lodge, board, and educate them. Betty is at last converted, and, like all the saints in real life, finding godliness profitable for the present state, gets forward in the world, is well married to a man of the converted, and instead of a barrow, keeps a good sausage shop.

BLACK GILES THE POACHER, is what every poacher is, a thief. Jack Weston, against whom Giles had lodged an information, for unlawfully taking game, delivers Giles from death, being overwhelmed in the ruins of a wall, and reminds the unfortunate poacher, that instead of suffering him to perish, " the revenge a christian takes is " to deliver him." A Mr. Wilson, is taught by

our author to say, that

"Such an action is worth a whole volume of comments "on that precept of our blessed Lord, '*Love your enemies, "do good to them that hate you.*"

The poacher dies in a state of penitence.

TAWNEY RACHEL is a fortune-teller, who, for her thefts and tricks, is sent to Botany Bay.

VOL. VI.

THE easy circumstances in which her annuity, the returns from her publications, increased by the popularity of her prudent connection with the methodistical societies, the dividends of the family property, acquired in the school in Park-Street, redoubled by purchase in the funds during the American war, and now sold out, had placed Mrs. More and her sisters, enabled them to settle at Cowslip-Green, west of Bristol, on the Bridgwater road, and to take a house at Bath, where they spend the winter. Thus comfortably disposed, their acquaintance was extended, their visitants multiplied, and no means were omitted to gain popularity, to purchase fame; and (after all her connection with plays, tragedies, comedians and theatres) by frequenting religious societies, and meetings of all descriptions, and no description, to purify herself for apotheosis, and become the dagon of methodism. The heretical sects became proud of this "elect lady;" her praises were re-echoed from one conventicle to another; but to the real dissenters she never

attempted to unite herself, who, I doubt not, will disown her. With Mr. Jay, of Bath, who, I believe, is not of any ancient class of dissenters, she certainly joined in communion, associated with him, and " entertained him at her house."

Religion now appeared a more direct and certain road to consequence, and the gratification of her ambition, than poetry and the drama. The connection with the established church, however, was neither forgotten nor neglected. An acquaintance had been made, and sedulously cultivated with more than one Bishop, to whom she appeared no " *Proteus*," but an admirer of the church liturgy, and devoted to her hierarchy. The good of mankind is not only the professed, but the real object of all religious persuasions, and the benefit of " *Sunday*" schools, now in their infancy, was a topic on which people of different religious opinions were generally agreed. All her former " egarements du cœur" were forgotten; and mildness, goodness, piety, benevolence, all the virtues, were predicated of H. More. A kind of sacred pride regulated her dress, address, and even tone of voice. Her sisters felt the restraint somewhat uneasy; but they had intervals, when alone, which relieved them from these austere and ascetic habits.

The frequent little alms-deeds, which as a steward for the Crane-Court Society, and other friends of Sunday schools, she distributed in the country amongst children and their parents, at-

tracted notice, secured celebrity, and strongly intrenched her in a fair reputation, the object of her ambition. That she is entitled to a fair character, to the credit of some acts of charity, of a prudent and moral conduct, of strong feelings of piety, and a religious demeanour and profession, I have no wish or intention to deny. The objections I have to make are not altogether against her understanding; it is a meanness of mind and a maliciousness of heart, as they have displayed themselves by overt acts on several occasions in common life. But though I am ready to acknowledge her attainments and abilities, for I deny her genius, it will not certainly be a long time doubtful that her abilities have been considered greater than they are, and that she has imposed on the world, as much in her literary, as in the complexion of her heart.

The allegories, noticed in her 5th vol. and her pious little tracts, were published separately during the war with France, of which hundreds of thousands, I rather think *millions*, have hyberbolically been said to have been sold. The 6th vol. begins with "Thoughts on the Manners of the "Great." To aim at perfection, to purify the heart, to be separate from the world, is the object which this tract professes to inculcate. The author thinks and writes better from this period than in her preceding volumes. Whether it be really true that she took help I cannot affirm, although I do not doubt it. Peter Pindar seems sure it is so.

" At times she finds of hemp a little wad,
" Bids some young Levite spin it:—nothing loth,
" He adds large quantities of *flax*, kind lad,
" And with the mixture fabricates a cloth."

Again—" Miss Hannah finds a scrap of leather,
" *Horse skin*—and, slily, to some CRISPIN goes:
" CRISPIN adds calf skin—puts them both together,
" And makes a tolerable pair of shoes."

To analyze this chapter is not easy, its manner being altogether immethodical, desultory and abrupt. For the satisfaction of the reader, I will select a few specimens, requesting him at the same time to forget Mrs. Cowley, Mrs. Yearsley, and the Curate of Blagdon.

" But after all, a fair fame, the support of numbers, and " the flattering concurrence of human opinion, is obviously " a deceitful dependance; for as every individual must die " for himself, and answer for himself, both these imaginary " resources will fail, just at the moment when they could " have been of any use. A good reputation, even without " internal piety, would be worth obtaining, if the tribunal " of heaven were fashioned after the manner of human " courts of judicature."

" Outward actions are the surest, and, indeed, to human " eyes, the only evidences of sincerity, but christianity is a " religion of *motives* and *principles*. The gospel is con- " tinually referring to the *heart*, as the source of good; it " is to the poor in *spirit*, to the pure in *heart*, that the " divine blessing is annexed."

" May I be permitted to say a word on the mischiefs of " virtue, or, rather, of that shining counterfeit, which, " while it wants the specific gravity, has much of the " brightness of sterling worth? Never, perhaps, did any " age produce more beautiful declamations in praise of vir-

" tue than the present; never were more polished periods
" rounded in honour of humanity. A primitive Christian
" would conclude, that 'righteousness and peace had there
" met together.' But how would he be surprised to find
" that the obligation to these duties was not always thought
" binding, not only on the reader but on their eloquent en-
" comiasts themselves. How would they be surprised to
" find that universal benevolence may subsist with partial
" injustice, and boundless liberality with sordid selfishness!
" that a man may seem eager in redressing the injuries of
" half the globe, without descending to the petty detail of
" private virtues; and burn with zeal for the good of mil-
" lions he never saw, while he is spreading vice and ruin
" through the little circle of his own personal influence!"

Notwithstanding the theatre and drama have been so much reprobated by her, Mrs. More could not finish this chapter without alluding by name to the " School for Scandal!"

The slave trade is mentioned, and a liberal, tolerant spirit, an enlightened candour, begins, it is said, to be prevalent. This, she says, she wrote before the French revolution and the Blagdon controversy; if written since that dispute, the Curate of Blagdon, at least, would have reason to object to the truth of these observations.

On the religion of the fashionable world, p. 97, she thus writes—

" Even the most negligent attendant on public worship
" must know, that the obnoxious creed, to whose malig-
" nant potency this general desertion is ascribed by the no-
" ble author, is never read above three or four Sundays in the
" year; and even allowing the validity of the objections
" brought against it, that does not seem a very adequate
" reason for banishing the most scrupulous and tender con-

" sciences from church on the remaining eight-and-forty " Sundays of the calendar."

This lady, who but a short time back boasted of the universal spirit of toleration and liberality that was diffusing itself over the world, who is here endeavouring, without argument, to reconcile tender consciences to the Athanasian creed, brings the neglect of reading it as an article of accusation against the Curate of Blagdon, not that she herself believes the creed, but that, hating the man, she was desirous of including him in every respect within the damnatory clauses.

Some general praise is here also bestowed on the liturgy of the church, furnished no doubt by some " Levitical lad."

The following paragraph (p. 104) is not favourable to christianity.

" If therefore, in this voluptuous age, when a frivolous " and relaxing dissipation has infected our very studies, in- " fidelity will not be at the pains of deep research and ela- " borate investigation, even on such subjects as are congenial " to its affections, and promotive of its object; it is vain to " expect that christianity will be more engaging, either as " an object of speculation, or as a rule of practice; since it " demands a still stronger exertion of those energies which " the gay world is not at the pains to exercise, even on the " side they approve. For the evidences of christianity re- " quire attention to be comprehended, no less than its doc- " trines require humility to be received, and its precepts " self-denial to be obeyed."

In the paragraph I am just going to transcribe, unamiable ideas are entertained of the divine attributes, and a false judgment of the spirit of christianity.

"The strong and generous bias in favour of universal "toleration, noble as the principle itself is, has engendered "a dangerous notion that all error is innocent. Whether "it be owing to this, or to whatever other cause, it is cer- "tain that the discriminating features of the christian reli- "gion are every day growing into less repute; and it is "become the fashion, even among the better sort, to evade, "to lower, or to generalize, its most distinguishing pe- "culiarities."

I have long been of opinion, that H. More's system is not the gospel in its purity. She is an enemy to toleration it is evident; and no true christian can be intolerant. Her christianity, though not popish, is more illiberal, and would persecute as hotly, if she had the power. Toleration is the spirit of christianity. He who loves not his brother, cannot love God. All men, of all nations, are equally dear to him, of whatever complexion. Had the eternal happiness of men depended on assent to a creed, or the knowledge of a system, his justice would have taught them that system, and proposed the creed. Where there is no law, there is no transgression; yet, according to her doctrine, all who do not believe "pecu- "liarities" which they never heard of, are to be excluded from salvation. What the "peculiarities" are to which she alludes, I am at a loss to know for certain; but I suppose she means the system. In the gospel, however, there is no system. It came to teach us, that "denying ungodliness, we should "live soberly and righteously." There is no metaphysical disquisition there. It inculcates the purest benevolence and morality in practical life,

proposing the noblest, the highest rewards for virtuous, and severe punishment for vicious conduct. It is the sentence of "well done, good and "faithful servants," that is the ticket of admission, if I may so express myself, to eternal life, and not whether you was zealous for a creed, a system, or "non-descript peculiarities." To "generalize," to comprehend the whole race of man in benevolence and charity, is an attribute of Deity; to singularize, disqualify, and exclude, is the mark of ignorance, uncharitableness, and antichrist. The best christians that ever lived, heard of neither the Nicene or the Athanasian creed, and I am confident many Gentiles shall enter into life. Did not the same God who created Mrs. More, make also Lady Mac Sarcasm? Is God the God of the Jews, of the Gentiles, of the Christians, and not of the Turks also? Did not the whole heathen mythology lead to the worship of one God, although they had their demi-gods and goddesses? Did not some of these subaltern divinities represent certain virtues? If the christian calendar were purified, how many impure she-saints, how many rogue-saints would there not be thrown out, for *saints* are in christianity, what *gods* were in heathenism. Do not, by her own account, as many sins, as many crimes, exist in christian countries, as in the polished nations of antiquity? What is the difference between the object and motives of the late war, and any other curse which God permitted to exist in any former age of the world? Have not the christian King, the catholic King,

and the Defender of the Faith, with their subjects, mutually hated each other, and done their utmost to "sink, burn and destroy one the other?" Would they not all resemble their master, after whose name they are called, if they lived in good neighbourhood, and "dwelt in unity?" Does Mrs. More's "distinguishing peculiarities" tend to accelerate this blessed day, or to perpetuate animosity, a discordia fratrum, or spiritually, by enactments that dare to reach beyond the grave, to "sink, burn, and destroy eternally! Mrs. Hannah should retire to some lazar-house, for a cure of the disorders of the human heart, "drink "milk," for in true christianity she is yet a babe, a stranger to the "bond of perfectness!"

Vol. 6, page 114.

"There is so little of the Author of christianity left in "his own religion, that an apprehensive believer is ready "to exclaim, with the woman at the sepulchre, '*They "have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they "have laid him.*' The locality of Hell and the existence "of an Evil Spirit are annihilated, or considered as abstract "ideas. When they are alluded to, it is periphrastically; "or they are discontinued not on the ground of their being "awful and terrible, but they are set aside as topics too "vulgar for the polished, too illiberal for the learned, and "as savouring too much of credulity for the enlightened."

The first sentence of this paragraph I entirely agree with. "They indeed have taken away my "Lord," but it is in a very different sense from Mrs. Hannah. I ask, who has taken him away? Ever since the time of Constantine he has been partially absent. Glosses, confessions, creeds,

and decrees, have perverted the truths of the gospel. Peter, Jack, and Martin have tore the lace from off the coat; but still the coat remains, and Martin has restored it in a considerable degree, and brushed it up, and made it look decent. But where have they laid my Lord? Have they hid him in the Athanasian creed and confessions of faith? Come, let us reason together; for "God "has a controversy with thee!" Yes! they have hid him; but the gospels still remain, and there he may be found, if your "soul loveth him," and I will tell you who and what he is; for you are not yet acquainted with him. I speak not this in bitterness or in wrath, but in argument, in pity, and in tears. Jesus, the gospel, the good-news, the glad tidings, is "*meekness* and *lowliness in* "*heart, peace on earth, goodwill towards men!* "*His yoke is easy, his burden is light.*" Here the "peculiarities" are described. They are preached on the mount, they are contained in a few aphorisms. "Do unto others as you would "they should do unto you;" "love your enemies, "do good to them that hate you and persecute "you, and pray for them who despitefully use "you." These are the principles of the divine ethics, which Christ revealed and preached; and on these topics there is a field for descanting, and preaching usefully till the end of the world.

For what purpose has God made man? Is it not to enjoy him, to glorify him, to be happy in this state and the next. That he should create beings, endowed with such wonderful faculties as

reason, memory and imagination, for any other purpose, it is impossible, without denying his attributes of goodness, mercy and benevolence, to conceive and believe. How, then, is God's glory and the happiness of mankind promoted? By obedience to his first command, "increase and "multiply, and replenish the earth;" by rendering that existence which God confers happy, by doing good universally to all, being equally God's creatures; by worshipping God the father of all. And how is the happiness of the millions that inhabit this world to be effected and ensured? By the wisest laws, and universal charity, that love inculcated by our eldest brother, who gave us a new law, the commandment of love.

Here are no metaphysical disquisitions. The purest morality, on the most sublime motives, viz. the love of virtue for its own sake. The intellectual pleasures arising from a contemplation of all the adorable attributes of the divine mind, imitation of those attributes, by comprehending the whole race within our love and charity, being all brethren of one great family, looking up for every good in the present and future life to the general and great father of all; these enforced by threats and promises, are the duties required of man.—For the practice of these, and enjoyment of the delights arising from the observance of them, sublime endowments, bright genius, extensive reading, and profound erudition are not necessary.—The attributes of God are written on the works of nature, in characters legible to the meanest

capacity. It is duties in actual life that God has required of us; and the eternal allotment of man is not determined by any gloss, or speculative, metaphysical creed, of human invention. If so, "who "then can be saved?" What ecclesiastic in the world can tell who the author of the Athanasian creed was, or, if he speaks honestly, can say he understands it, and believes the *whole* of it? If, then, the learned, excepting Hannah More and the non-descripts, who are in the "secrets of the "Almighty, and perfectly know and understand "all his decrees from eternity," do not comprehend this complicated piece of metaphysics, shall the middling and the labouring classes of the people of this country, as well as those nations who never heard of it, "without doubt everlastingly "perish?" I think Mrs. Hannah, as she knows several senators, and pretends to have great influence, ought, in charity to them, to apply to move the "Omnipotence of Parliament" to pass an act of indemnity, to exempt, at least, his Majesty's subjects from the penalties of this creed. Let not Mrs. Hannah, who can reason maliciously when it serves her purpose, run away with and propagate the idea, that Sir Archibald is not orthodox. I have always been orthodox, and I am sure more so than she, or my brother Sir Abraham Elton, I am always, I hope, more charitable; and I am a steady and an invariable friend to the Hierarchy in the church, and royalty in the state, because that mode is most conducive to order and good government. The ecclesiastic is the best

assistant the magistrate can have. A government cannot exist without religion; and to render religion, like government, respectable, it ought to have a public establishment. Now that christianity, the present established church of England, or the people, should lose any advantage, temporal or spiritual, by the abolition or the expunging of the Athanasian creed from our otherwise most excellent Liturgy, there would be just the same reason to lament, the nine Muses would have to weep, if all the poetry, including sacred dramas, Miss Hannah ever wrote, were burnt.—The church can spare it; and Mrs. H. may order herself to be wrapped in it as a winding sheet. A most reverend Archbishop, perhaps Tillotson, said, "I wish we were well rid of it." But as long as it stands in its present place, I will, as I always have done, continue to read it in obedience to authority. And what turpitude can there be to me in reading the Athanasian creed, when the immaculate Mrs. H. More, in her "*Strictures on Female Education*,' tells the British ladies, that there are among the excellent moral songs of Horace, some "famous" loose, I had almost said bawdy "odes," which she has often perused, and does still read; but though these, she says, "ought not to be read by females, "or to be even named or referred to," she takes care to tell the ladies, for the men may have long ago forgot them, that such "famous odes" exist.

It is very possible that Mrs. More herself may consider the reality, as well as the locality of the future punishment, that is hell, as an abstract

idea. Men of learning, certainly have no doubt respecting the certainty of future rewards and punishments. They, however, I believe, differ from Mrs. More respecting the degree of it. We have no communication with the other world. The dead return not to relate to us the affairs of the invisible state. From the various lot of man in this life, as well as from revelation, the chief end of Christ's advent, our faith is strong respecting the future existence; and that men will be rewarded and punished, is our glorious hope. But that the most wicked shall be everlastingly punished, that is to say, a punishment without end, is totally inconsistent with the divine perfections. The scriptures say, eis aiona, for ages. The punishment is no doubt terrible, and sufficient to deter the most obdurate. But Mrs. More is too bloody and tyrannical. She is for everlasting torments, torments beyond the heat of any pyrometer the human imagination can conceive, and she is ready to cast all into that furnace who do not agree with her in modes and opinion. Because she breaks her egg at the small end, she condemns those who break it on the round; and me, because I am indifferent at which end I break it, who am determined to get the food out of the shell any way, even by a Cæsarian operation, I have no doubt she would wish

"Grill'd, roasted, carbonaded, fricasse'd."

But let the human race "rejoice evermore;" the power of man extends not beyond the grave.

Inquisitions and star-chambers may light the faggot and consume the body, but they can do no more. Tyrannical persons, like H. More, by iniquity, may succeed in ejecting an honest person from all the comforts of human life, and deprive him of his integrity and respect amongst men. But it is God alone who can act on the immortal spirit. It is only by the intervention of the body, that the greatest tyrant can act on a human soul; and this, increased to a certain degree of violence, breaks the connection between soul and body, and sets the soul free when he thinks to overload it. But the soul is not visible to be frightened with his frown; it is not extended to be shut up in his dungeon; it is not palpable to be loaded with fetters; it is not combustible to be burnt at the stake; it is not divisible to be mangled on the wheels. It is God only who can act on the soul. He needs not the odour of flowers, nor the savour of meats, nor any other aids of matter, to furnish it with agreeable sensations. He needs not the use of chains, dungeons, suffocating damps, sulphur, fire, to afflict it with pain. It is he, O soul of man, who can leave thee in thy natural darkness, to wander in ignorance, a prey to all the tortures that accompany doubt; but it is he also who can advance thy understanding to the sublimest height. It is he who can strike the tyrant with unutterable horror; it is he who can excite in the soul those ineffable delights, for which we have no name, and which we cannot now conceive.

With great affectation of liberality, Mrs. More rejoiceth that the tyranny of the spiritual Procrustes (p. 115) is annihilated, and that men for their opinions are not now applied to this bed, and to be shortened or lengthened to its size. Her hypocrisy has long been noticed. With all this parade, she has prepared a " bed of trial" for the unfortunate Curate of Blagdon, spread the Athanasian creed on her couch, measured him on it, and, if we can believe her, and she deserves but little credit for she can deliberately invent and propagate falsehoods, finding the Curate not *long enough*, reported a " secret accusation" to the Bishop. The Curate, however, has at length *laid Miss Hannah on her back*, on the couch of reason and argument.

In p. 128, the definition given of religion, that

" It is not an opinion, nor a sentiment, nor an act or " performance; but a habit, a disposition, a temper; not a " name, but a nature; it is turning the whole mind to God;"

is not a true one. Religion is *a rule of conduct looking to God.*

" No one surely will impute to bigotry or enthusiasm, " the lamenting, or even remonstrating against such des- " perate negligence; nor can it be deemed illiberal to en- " quire, Whether even a still greater evil does not exist? " I mean, Whether pernicious principles are not as stre- " nuously inculcated as those of real virtue and happiness " are discountenanced? Whether young men are not ex- " pressly taught to take custom and fashion as the ultimate " and exclusive standard by which to try their principles and " to weigh their actions? Whether some idol of false ho- " nour be not consecrated and set up for them to worship?

" Whether, even among the better sort, reputation be not
" held out as a motive of sufficient energy to produce vir-
" tue, in a world where yet the greatest vices are every day
" practised openly, without at all obstructing the reception of
" those who practise them into the best company? Whether
" resentment be not ennobled; and pride, and many other
" passions, erected into honourable virtues—virtues not less
" repugnant to the genius and spirit of Christianity than
" obvious and gross vices? Will it be thought impertinent
" to enquire if the awful doctrines of a perpetually present
" Deity, and a future righteous judgment, are early im-
" pressed and lastingly engraven on the hearts and con-
" sciences of our high-born youth?"

To practise literally all the virtues and graces, and to obey the precepts of christianity, is more than any human creature hitherto atchieved. Whoever attempts it, is likely to be a victim to knavery. To turn the other cheek when the one is smitten, for the pleasure of fresh blows and insults; to part with the coat as well as the cloak; to live altogether unspotted from the world, may be talked about and preached, but none practise. The Bishop of Bangor did not act so; nor did H. More, when Mr. Bere wrote to her respecting the extravagancies of her schoolmaster, recollect, our religion recommended such precepts as doing good for evil. Indeed the Bishop banged his opponent, and H. More " privately accused," with a view to ruin the Curate's character, and starve his body. I mean not to speak against early religious education. I approve of it; but I deny, that vicious and pernicious principles are taught, unless it be by non-descripts, and those of real virtue and happiness discountenanced. The wicked

themselves admire, approve of, and respect virtue. If, by false honour duelling be meant, there are few cases indeed in which it can be justified. But honour, by whatever words defined, or however ridiculed, has often pulled back its possessor from the commission of crimes and sins, when a more exalted principle did not deter from atrociousness., A man or woman of honour, would scorn to "accuse privately," or openly attempt to rob an old friend and neighbour of his property.

That reputation, or rather the pride of reputation, has frequently produced the same effects as virtue, is every day discernible. H. More feels few pangs of conscience on her various detections; but her pride teareth her, and disturbs her repose, at the thought of a sullied reputation, by an exposure to the world. That she should ever be again countenanced and received by persons of honour, truth and character, will be the strongest proof of her doctrines.

"That reputation (p. 149) be held out as a sufficient motive to produce virtue in a world where yet the greatest vices are every day practised openly, without at all obstructing the reception of those who practise them into the best company? Whether resentment be not ennobled; and pride, and many other passions, erected into honourable virtues—virtues not less repugnant to the genius and spirit of Christianity than obvious and gross vices?"

To what extent the "wholesome discipline, "the government of the affections" are to be carried, we are not told, nor does she elucidate her theory, or recommend her doctrine, by her own or

the practice of others. The amalgamate of her christianity is no where defined. There is something always obscure and undescribed. Virtue is not known or proved but by temptation and trial. Dignity of character is acquired and displayed only in difficult and arduous situations. Men should be taught,

"Under the constant impression, (p. 151) that *He* to "whom they must one day be accountable for intentions, "as well as words and actions, is witness to the one as well "as the other? that he not only is 'about their path,' "but 'understands their very thoughts.'"

The lady quarrels with good breeding or politeness; and yet allows it to be a good substitute for christianity and real goodness. She is mistaken. Politeness is a grace belonging to christianity; but it is not the whole. *Love, peace, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, patience, meekness,* are included in the idea of politeness. Aided by the affections of the human heart, which are oftener depraved by evil example and the institutes of society, than by any corruption of nature, the polite man will "esteem others better than him-"self," will not "behave himself unseemly," will not "be easily puffed up." Men are, no doubt, often polite from motives of vanity, advantage, and worldly wisdom; and they as often are "se-"rious christians" from the same motives. Lessons of prudence are given to noviciates in the world; and happy are they who have friends early enough to deliver them such counsel, against polite men and women, for these are commonly their

means of deception. The same lectures, in this country, are become necessary against "serious "christianity," which is too often a mask, an upper garment. A man, a pagan, without having ever heard of the word christianity, or receiving a lecture on good breeding, and politeness so called, may, from the light enlightening every man that cometh into the world, along with the education of his country, be polite, be humane, and a worshipper of the God of the universe, and so, without knowing it, possess many of the graces of christianity. To be a christian and a good man, it is not necessary to be baptized, and be called a christian. Virtue and morality are taught in other countries, as well as in christian countries. And after all that is here said about christianity, God is as sincerely and purely worshipped, even in Asia, as in Europe, and may as justly be offended at the idolatry of the one as the other. A Mahomedan would be shocked at the idea of a triune God, and at the altar-pieces, as well of reformed as Popish churches. To pray to, or use the intercession of any intermediate beings, with God, to kneel before a wafer or an image, would be gross idolatry. It would be desirable if H. More had defined her system of christianity, that we might know it, and how much more it contains besides the graces and virtues recommended in the gospel, for the worship of one God ought and must be in every quarter of the globe the same, that idolatry and mysticism might be expelled, by ascertaining where-

in virtue in Europe differs from virtue in Asia, Africa and America, and whether Jehovah be not the God of the Gentiles, as well as of the Jews. With all her knowledge and talents, with all her profession and recommendation of the christian graces and virtues, the " discipline of " the affections," unintelligible " seriousness," and " self-denial," which, could we suppose a whole people to adopt, would make England a grotesque nation indeed, there is undeniably in H. More's grand scheme some mystery, some secret Jesuitism, some dark-lanthorn illumination, she either cannot or will not disclose.

The chief points insisted on in the Alcoran are the unity of God, the worship and reverence of the Supreme Being, and resignation to his will, and the practice of moral and divine virtues. The style is beautiful and fluent; and, particularly where the attributes of God are described, truly sublime. Will H. More dare say, that the Grand Signior, our great and faithful ally, a true worshipper of God, his Grand Mufti, and his Priests, who never read nor heard the Athanasian creed, " shall without doubt everlastingly perish."— What in this case becomes of the justice of God. Has not a Mozlem Faquir as good a chance of entering the kingdom of heaven as an English non-descript; and can the fanaticism of the one be more acceptable to the Creator of all men than the ascetic devotion of the other. But it is characteristic of us, to insist that no nation should be, or are free, or happy, or rich, or should eat roast

beef, but Englishmen. Away with superstition, and artful and cunning fanaticism; they never did and never will contribute to the happiness of mankind. Oh! when will the day arrive, when reason shall be the characteristic attributes of all men, when the only true God shall by all nations be worshipped in spirit and in truth, without any machinery of human invention; man of whatever complexion, shall call man his brother; the missions of fanaticism become missions of righteousness and truth; and the opprobrious names of Papist, Protestant, Dissenter, Methodist, Jew, and Mahomedan, be forgot, and all men, in obedience to the "New commandment of love," adore HIM FIRST AND LAST, his knowledge filling the earth as the waters cover the sea, there being but one fold and shepherd! Then, and not till then, shall superstition and fanaticism cease to be necessary engines in the government of the world; simulation and dissimulation, with all the various modes of deception, whether of assumed sanctity in religious craft, or of temporal knavery and imposture in the commerce of mankind, become superfluous!

That "Self-abasement is inseparable from true "christianity," I apprehend is not a true proposition, if we take christianity as it is in the gospels. It is man, and not God, who pronounceth the world accursed. During his stay here, there is enough in the world to make him happy; employed in the cultivation of the earth, the improvement of his own mind, (being a creature of

education) in tracing the works of nature, and thereby the divine attributes; in the adoration of Him, "who giveth richly all things to enjoy," and in regulating his actions by the hope of a resurrection to a life of immortality. Man is an animal of high rank. It is superstition, evil policy, and tyranny, that have degraded him. The propagators of fanaticism, on one hand, have tyrannized over his mind, and politicians, on the other, have scourged him with scorpions. The angel is become a beast. Every man is made erect ("os sublime dedit") and need not be self-abased, unless under the conviction of great crimes; and then God is merciful. Let him be governed wisely, and a pure religion, christianity, be taught him, namely, his duty to God, mankind and himself, enforced by the denunciations, the hopes and promises of the gospel, and he will soon be a very different animal from what he has hitherto been, "a new creature." But if we view him as he is generally to be met with, imposed on by every empiric in religion, his mind paralyzed and benumbed by the horrors of superstition, his hopes desperate, and the father of all goodness and mercy represented as his enemy, who has prepared everlasting chains and penal fire for him, we need not wonder to see him submit himself so easy a victim to his tyrants, pains and penalties over his head, fire and faggot at his tail, ready to torment or consume him, and threatened as to his immortal spirit, over which their authority pretends to reach, with "adamantine

" chains and penal fire." On many occasions, indeed, he is a whimsical creature. The whole race may be well read in John Bull, who is easily gulled into a South-Sea bubble, to run in multitudes to see a full grown man go into a quart bottle, a horse with his head where his tail should be, a coal-heaver in a pulpit, stripped to his shirt, to fight with the devil, and to buy by hundreds Hannah More's strictures on *female purity*, and " female education."

The question that " there have been more men " of genius on the side of christianity than against " it," is not a fair argument, nor fairly stated. Christianity will always, I trust, have not men of genius only, but all good men on its side; and were christianity not corrupted, but taught as it is contained in the scriptures, its enemies would be few indeed. But when every brain-shock fool, and every designing illiterate knave, start a new doctrine, which is pretended to be founded in the scriptures; when a Henry Young, a Harward, and a H. More, under the pretext of " serious- " ness and vital christianity, disseminate strange " doctrines and absurd extravagancies," is it to be wondered that religion should to some appear less respectable, and its credit be " seriously" affected.

Since the time of Constantine, when christianity took the seat of paganism, and began to be established by decrees, and defended and propagated by the sword, the experiment could not have been tried. When, in what century since 500, durst an inhabitant of Europe write and

publish against christianity? "He'd singe his "beard at it." To deny, write, or publish against the doctrine of the Trinity in *this country*, for example, would be fatal to the interest, credit, character, and safety of any man. Dr. Priestley, one of the first philosophers of the age, to the disgrace of the country where it happened, having written against it, had his property devoted to an Auto da fe, and the only regret of some was, that he had himself escaped the flames. In fear of it, he was forced to exile himself. Let no man falsely infer, that I mean to deny or impugn the doctrine. It is an established doctrine, which, be it scriptural or unscriptural, it is unlawful to deny. When H. More determined the ruin of the Curate of Blagdon, she, against her own conscience and better information, instructed the Bishop that he had preached and spoke against that doctrine, neglected to read the Athanasian creed; and she called one other clergyman at least, without proof, Socinian. The lady has yet to learn what christianity is, and wants truth, as well as force of mind, to reason on the subject.

In p. 170, she says—

"It is the beauty of our religion, that it is not held out "exclusively to a few select spirits; that it is not an object "of speculation, or an exercise of ingenuity, but a *rule of* "*life*, suited to every condition, capacity, and temper."

Now this is true of the religion itself, as it was intended to be, and is contained, in the scriptures; but the doctors of christianity tell and teach us, and enact by *their* decrees, that though "many

" are called, few will be saved." She adds—

" It is the glory of the Christian religion to *be*, what it " was the glory of every ancient philosophic system *not* " to be, *the religion of the people*; and that which con- " stitutes its characteristic value, is its suitableness to the " genius, condition, and necessities of all mankind."

Every religion has the same object and pretensions. Among the ancients, the philosophers did not believe the whole mummery of the mythology, and Strabo expressly tells us, that the state made use of a superstitious mythology as a bugbear to govern the people. If there were less system and speculative doctrines, " after the rudiments of the " world," there perhaps would have been less occasion to repeat the same observation of christian Europe. But though an attentive reader can easily perceive that H. M. thinks the Athanasian creed, and some parts of the liturgy very exceptionable, for the world she would not refuse them the highest *general* praise, nor oppose craft, nor the general stream, nor publish aught but what she knew would be acceptable, well knowing the tendency to superstition natural to the human mind; that the dissemination of mysticism would be by the people more readily received, and to some of their superiors more agreeable, than true and genuine christianity. I repeat it again, H. More possesses moderate talents, greatly puffed; but her most prominent feature is cunning, artfulness and deceit. H. M. is no fool!

It is remarkable, that there is not in all her works one expression of disapprobation of wars

and bloodshed, or any anxiety for the eternal fate of those who have fallen in battle, or a wish that the day may arrive when "wars shall be no more." She seems perfectly to assent to that article that says, "It is lawful for christian men to serve in "war." What becomes now of her doctrine of "forbearance and self-denial?" Her doctrines are either false, or the practice of christian societies wrong. She ought to aim her feeble blows at the root of the evil, or grant herself to be inconsistent, or an hypocrite. Why not object to fighting altogether? Why not disapprove of fighting battles on Sunday, murdering the human species on the Sabbath day, and selling mackarel, as well as hair-dressers combing out our hair? What is the difference, the moral turpitude, in the eye of reason, of virtue, of genuine christianity, and in the sight of God, between letters of marque to "*take*, "*sink, burn, and destroy*" a French, Dutch, or American vessel, on the high seas, and two highwaymen or footpads taking the liberty to stop, put in bodily fear, rob, maim, and murder a man on the highway? What is the difference, in turpitude, between stabbing, by "*private accusa-*"*tions*," by day, an honest man's character, and murdering his person by *night?*—Society is not likely to be much mended by this lady's writings. The inference is lamentable, *that nonsense always did, and is likely always to sell better than sense*, and *fanaticism* to be more acceptable than *genuine* christianity. I never yet read any thing more excellent, nor more congruous to the spirit of the

gospel, than "our duties," as described in the church catechism. With her, to be a good christian, seems to be *cunning and craft for this world;* and she takes care in her gospel novels that her profligates reclaimed, as the methodists indeed often do, whatever befals them in the next, shall, in this world, arrive at "good circumstances." She herself in her early years, in the high days of youth, without going to the church, secured "two "hundred pounds a year for life;" and now in advanced years, she, by her "bloody piety," has got more.—"Godliness is great gain" to some people.

In p. 192, the modern philosopher has afforded her matter for an unmeaning paragraph, antithetically constructed. Whether the soul of man be material or immaterial, does not weaken the obligations to virtue. The space intervening between death and the resurrection, is, to the materialist, as a "punctum stans;" the myriads of years that flow between are as the sleep of one night; he sleeps to night, and awakes to-morrow, the resurrection; he dies to night, and awakes at the resurrection to-morrow. He is unconscious of the time elapsed between. A disadvantage and an advantage attends the lot of the immaterialist, that the years that pass between death and the last judgment are added to his happiness or sufferings. Many pious christians have adopted both opinions, and though I am of the latter opinion, I do not think the other unreasonable. For Mrs. More, therefore, to carp at the materialist, was but idleness and vanity. The invisible world

is altogether unknown to us; departed spirits return not to us, to relate the condition of that state; and revelation has only assured us, that our Lord is gone to prepare a place for us, and that God, for that end, and our comfort and hope, raised him from the dead.

The position (p. 197) that "the pride of great "acquirements, and of great wealth, equally ob- "structs the reception of divine truth into the "heart," is not fact. Sir Isaac Newton, and very many other luminaries, have been, and will be on the side of christianity, and it will influence their general lives. Learning, indeed, always revolts at mystical and non-descript, but will ever approve of and embrace rational, christianity.

Page 206, Mrs. More says—

"But these unfruitful professors would do well to recol- "lect that, by a conduct so little worthy of their high cal- "ling, they not only violate the law to which they have "vowed obedience, but occasion many to disbelieve or to "despise it; that they are thus in a great measure account- "able for the infidelity of others, and of course will have "to answer for more than their own personal offences: "For did they in any respect live up to the principles they "profess; did they adorn the doctrines of Christianity by "a life in any degree consonant to their faith; did they ex- "hibit any thing of the 'beauty of holiness' in their daily "conversation; they would then give such a demonstra- "tive proof, not only of the sincerity of their own obe- "dience, but of the brightness of that divine light by which "they profess to walk, that the most determined unbe- "liever would at last begin to think there must be *some- "thing* in a religion of which the effects were so visible, "and the fruits so amiable; and might in time be led to

" 'glorify,' not *them*, not the imperfect doers of these " works, but 'their Father which is in heaven.' Whereas, " as things are at present carried on, the obvious conclusion " must be, either that Christians do not believe in the reli- " gion they profess, or that there is no truth in the religion " itself."

What, for the sake of human nature in general, and Mrs. More in particular, would I not give that the Blagdon controversy had not existed! Oh! "how fallen!"

Much has lately been said of this lady; much for and against her. She has written much, and some things I hope usefully. She apprehends she is, and she is considered, as of an undescribed species of methodism. I marked, as I read her works, her system and her principles, and the result is, that in religion, as in the rest of her character, she is *specious and crafty*. For the scriptures she always expresses the utmost veneration, professes piety and practical religion, but alludes, though obscurely, to some latent speculative doctrine. Her TALES and ALLEGORIES are better than her RELIGION OF THE FASHIONABLE WORLD. There the heart is warmed, the sympathies of virtue and piety excited; here is a cold censoriousness, efforts to prove every thing wrong and to set them right; with an uncertain, undetermined, and often contradictory plan of conduct, as supplementary to the "*present fashionable* " *christianity*." With anxiety I have looked for, and expected to meet with, her definition of our religion, and her opinion of those doctrines which create sectarism. I have expected and looked in

vain. She thinks freely, speaks freely, speaks cautiously, speaks rigidly, "seriously, strictly;" she seems to know right and wrong, good and evil, orthodoxy and heterodoxy, and every doxy, all delivered in decent and appropriate language, sometimes arising from her desire to censure all, instruct all, offend none, obscure; and, in short, every thing, but her *design to make a book*, is invisible. At length, p. 226, something like a negative, but imperfect definition, is met with.

"The Christian religion is not intended, as some of its "fashionable professors seem to fancy, (she should have "said Methodists) to operate as a charm, a talisman, or in- "cantation, and to produce its effect by our pronouncing "certain mystical words, attending at certain consecrated "places, and performing certain hallowed ceremonies; but "it is an active, vital, influential principle, operating on "the heart, restraining the desires, affecting the general "conduct, and as much regulating our commerce with the "world, our business, pleasures, and enjoyments, our con- "versations, designs, and actions, as our behaviour in pub- "lic worship, or even in private devotion."

But, as if thinking this description of christianity wrong, in p. 240, she favours us with a more systematic one, and more decisive and characteristic of herself and her supposed sectarism, in the following definition:

"But if I were to venture to take my estimate with "a view more immediately *evangelical*; to insist that, "whatever *natural* religion and *fashionable* religion may "teach, it is the peculiarity of the *Christian* religion to "humble the sinner and exalt the Saviour; to insist that "not only the grossly flagitious, but that *all* have sinned; "that *all* are by nature in a state of condemnation. If I

" were to express these doctrines in plain scriptural terms,
" without lowering, qualifying, disguising, or doing them
" away; if I were to insist on this belief, and its implied
" and corresponding practices; I am aware that, with
" whatever condescending patience this little tract might
" have been so far perused, many a fashionable reader
" would here throw it aside, as having now detected the
" palpable enthusiast, the abettor of 'strange doctrines,'
" long ago consigned over by the liberal and the polite to
" bigots and fanatics. And yet, if the Bible be true, this
" is a simple and faithful description of Christianity."

The " Bible is true;" but because the bible is true, are we to believe any non-descript proposition H. More thinks proper to frame? The argument is sophistical. By the same reasoning we may prove any thing; and say, *Cain slew his brother Abel because he hated him;* and therefore, if the bible be true, every man when he hates his brother may slay him. Mrs. H. More, who *has* been called a pious woman, and believes the bible, has told several stories, and is convicted of " secret accusations," to injure a clergyman, therefore it is no crime or sin to tell lies, or to " accuse privately."

The bible is true; but this is neither a " sim-
" ple nor a faithful description of christianity."—
Respecting the trinitarian doctrine, the church of England is what is called orthodox. It has received and believes it. But how to " exalt the " Saviour," by whom, I suppose, she means Jesus Christ, above the degree of second person in the Trinity, without depressing God the father, I am at a loss to conjecture. The truth is, although

she denies it, that of the words Jesus Christ she is desirous, like all the non-descripts, to make a "charm, a talisman, an incantation," a *mystical*, unscriptural, *unreasonable*, unintelligible "strange "doctrine."

I have myself heard one of these *exalters of the Saviour*, in his church in Bristol, from the pulpit speak these words:—"There is no glory in hea- "ven, but what Jesus Christ gives it."

The clergy of the church of England, with some exceptions, are censured for not preaching and inculcating this doctrine; they are charged with teaching only a "frigid morality," they are (p. 244)

"Lukewarm and temporizing divines, who have become "popular by blunting the edge of that heavenly tempered "weapon, whose salutary keenness, but for their 'deceit- "*ful* handling,' would oftener 'pierce to the dividing "asunder of soul and spirit."

"But, (she goes on, p. 245) those severer preachers of "righteousness, who disgust by applying too closely to "the conscience; who lay the axe to the root, oftener "than the pruning knife to the branch; such heart-search- "ing writers as these will seldom find access to the houses "and hearts of the more modish Christians." "She is not "sure whether the former sort have not done peligion much "more harm than good."

In p. 76, she tells us—

"We have a wise and virtuous Minister," (Mr. Pitt!) "many respectable, and not a few 'serious' clergy. Their "number," she adds, "I am willing to hope is daily in- "creasing."

And so it would appear from the Blagdon controversy. There are nine connected with her

and her schools in Somersetshire! She, however, disclaims all desire of seeing the enthusiastic scenes of THE HOLY FATHERS OF THE DESART acted over again. Whether the scenes of the 17th century be congenial to the spirit of puritannical enthusiasm, let the preachers of "frigid "morality" in the church of England judge, and remember the 27th and 30th of January, 1648, when the Bishops were dismissed, and cathedrals and colleges converted into stables for the soldiers of the Lord, the exalters of the Saviour.

Of *her Remarks* on DUPONT'S SPEECH, I have little now to *remark*. She, wicked sinner, did all she could, and exalted her vulture's croak to engage the nations in a war ruinous to both, and to the royal cause and family of France. Her "bloody piety" is more deleterious to the human race than even the atheism of Dupont. He was for sparing the lives of his fellow-creatures by peace. She preached up blood and war, for the destruction of the innocent, to send myriads, untimely, without repentance, with all their sins upon their heads, to the eternal allotment. However foolish the speech of Dupont was, for none but a fool could say, "I am an atheist," that he was far less cruel than H. More is evident. That woman, I am persuaded, would by any means destroy any object that had the misfortune to displease her, or stand in the way of her projects. The whole history of her life proves it. The Blagdon controversy demonstrates it. She is now marked, and when the nation has recovered from the delirium of war, and John Bull shall have had

a good night's sleep, he will declare himself little obliged to those who administered the poisonous draught, that inflamed his brain with the phrenzy of breaking his own and his neighbour's head, and staying ten years at the public-house (a vice in another part of her works she by non-descriptisms desires to cure) to mortgage his estate to three hundred millions. "The child unborn may rue "the day." From the author of that pamphlet, except the reprobation of atheism, in which we all unite with her, no good can be expected. It is a farrago of falsehoods. From her blood-loving, hypocritical cant, the world, when she shall be better known, will learn but little virtue, little truth, little rational or true piety.

VOL. VII.

STRICTURES ON FEMALE EDUCATION.

TO correct the taste, to reform the manners, to revive the dormant religion of a nation, by endeavouring to "stir up the gift of God which "was in them," is not only patriotic, but benevolent. But the question is, how to do this, by what means, and by whom; and whether that which is proposed, be a reformation or deformation of taste. That Mrs. More has strong feelings of piety, that she has benevolence, and that part of charity called alms-giving, I will not deny; but I much doubt whether that degree of non-descript puritanism, which she with considerable

address so earnestly labours to resuscitate, be not as dangerous to the present and future happiness of a people, as that universal indifference, the existence of which, she, to make her own nostrum more acceptable, endeavours to prove, even if we should not enquire whether she have or have not, as has been lately surmised, any GRAND SCHEME or private object in view. Viewing the temporary mania, for it was but temporary, that suddenly arose in France to disgrace the cool temper, wise means, the liberal and extensively benevolent objects of the first stages of the revolution, with that horror it so justly excited, and which the friends of war and bloodshed, the despotic and tyrannically inclined, in this and every other country, never failed to magnify and exaggerate, I should appear void of penetration, and deficient in logical discrimination, if I suffered a particular censure to pass as a general imputation. This indeed was the potion too long infused into the cup of the people, and which, as our present Minister, Mr. Addington, is reported to have publicly declared, " brought the nation " to the brink of ruin," and made necessary peace on any terms, which delirated the mass, perverted reason, corrupted integrity, and paralyzed individual virtue. Of this cup, H. More has, herself, copiously drank, and abundantly administered to the intoxication of others. It was a suitable theme for her violent and tragical temper; and were she to live a thousand years, and so earnestly pray as to sweat as it were " drops of blood," her

guilt, even in that respect, would not be expiated. Of the murders of thousands, which she favoured and promoted, may she "repent with a repentance "not to be repented of."

With this leaven she studies to leaven the whole mass of the people; and lest the errors of the church of Rome, by acts of our legislature long ago declared "*damnable*," should be cancelled, and replaced by other French errors equally damnable, (for in damnation, I conceive, there are no degrees) she recommends, even in "Strictures on Female "Education," p. 5, *unanimity*, "in boldly and "nobly opposing" the French hydra, this centaur, the enemy of "*religion, order*, and *govern-* "*ments*," lest the Vicar of Christ should loose the guardianship of the keys of heaven and hell, whose priests impiously pronounced themselves, as history relates, greater than God, because they "could create God, by converting a wafer into "the body and blood of God." To describe then, with impartiality and a sincere regard to truth and justice, the professed and real object of the French revolution in the fewest words, as well as that of the war we have madly carried on, which began in iniquity, and has ended in disgrace, is to say— *The object of the French was the reformation of their own government, and the general amelioration of human society; but the neighbouring nations, to disgrace liberty, drove them to madness. England made war to monopolize the commerce of the world.*

Politics, however, now and then afford H. More a topic of declamation, and the popularity of her

works is thereby enhanced. But let us wait a little. Johnny Bull and Tommy Bull have not yet had a good night's rest. They have not had time to blink at each other's black eyes,

> " So politic, as if one eye
> " Upon the other were a spy;
> " That, to trepan the one to think
> " The other blind, both strove to blink."

to bind up their wounds, and count the money in their pockets. When they shall have done this, with how much pleasure will they read " Cheap " Tracts," written manifestly to popularize war. This then is " seriousness," " pure christianity, " evangelical virtues, self-abasement, secret habits " of self-controul, secret combat and silent victory, " vital christianity!"

Having been furnished with matter for a longer paragraph than usual, by *duelling* and *single combat* (p. 27) this re-christianizer of the British nation has a hard scratch (p. 33) at " *General History*, " *Natural History, Travels, Voyages, Lives, Ency-* " *clopædias, Criticisms*, and *Romances*," determined to make them all non-descripts, at all hazards.

" In animadverting farther on the reigning evils which " the times more particularly demand that women of rank " and influence should repress, Christianity calls upon them " to bear their decided testimony against every thing which " is notoriously contributing to the public corruption. It " calls upon them to banish from their dressing-rooms, (and " oh, that their influence could banish from the libraries of " their sons and husbands!) that sober and unsuspected mass " of mischief, which, by assuming the plausible names of " Science, of Philosophy, of Arts, of Belles Lettres, is

" gradually administering death to the principles of those " who would be on their guard, had the poison been labelled " with its own pernicious title. Avowed attacks upon re- " velation are more easily resisted, because the malignity is " advertised. But who suspects the destruction which lurks " under the harmless or instructive names of *General His-* " *tory*, *Natural History*, *Travels*, *Voyages*, *Lives*, *En-* " *cyclopædias*, *Criticism*, and *Romance*."

Ye Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, of St. Andrews, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, and Dublin! O Eton and Westminster, Ye Royal and Antiquary Societies, Royal Academy and Institutes, Ye Walkers, Kirwans, and Beddoes! What is to become of you, and all your pupils and eleves! Ye Arts and Sciences, ye are now by Hannah More, for the nation is to follow the suggestions of her paper-kite strictures, or she will have her fits and scratch! Ye are to be dismissed for ever; and non-descript preachers, H. Young, and Mr. Harward, *the holy fathers of the desart*, the nine parsons, are to take your places. You are " *avowed enemies*," she says, " to revelation !"

" Who," she adds, " will deny that many of these works " contain much admirable matter; brilliant passages, im- " portant facts, just descriptions, faithful pictures of nature, " and valuable illustrations of science? ' *But while the* " *dead fly lies at the bottom*,' the whole will exhale a " corrupt and pestilential stench."

Gentlemen! The British ladies are called upon by H. More, to

" Banish by their influence from their sons and husbands, " libraries, that sober and unsuspected mass of mischief, un- " der the plausible names of Science, of Philosophy, of Arts, " of Belles Lettres, &c. Avowed attacks upon revelation

" are more easily resisted, because the malignity is ad-
" vertised."

It will be an " Annus mirabilis" indeed, to see the Masters, Heads and Fellows of Colleges, turned non-descript, field and itinerant preachers! And Sir Joseph Banks, at the head of the Royal and Antiquary Societies, going on missions to Sierra Leone and elsewhere! She then has a hit at Rousseau; he and she both enthusiasts in their way.

British novels are condemned wholesale; yet her own sisters, with her help, produced one or two. Now, I ask this lady, when was it she read all the novels, for they are numerous? It was not before her conversion; for that did not take place till after her fruitless walks to church when she was young. It could not be since the reformation; for that would be a heinous sin. Did she know them intuitively? No! she certainly read them since she became a saint. Now if *she* has read them without guilt, why may not others; but perhaps, to instruct others, a woman must herself be wicked? i. e. " *knowing good and evil.*" Innocence and much knowledge do not go together. H. More, therefore, is either innocent and ignorant, or knowing and wicked. Dr. Priestley's works were publicly disapproved of, and the clergy read them; Mrs. More forbids novels and Rousseau, and the ladies will, therefore, read them both. I once saw a man hanged, who at his execution, declared he had always lived honestly, and was guilty of no other felonious act but that for which he was about to suffer, and that he

would not have committed that act, had he not heard a certain pious preacher describe the manner houses were broke into!

She next endeavours to stop the deluge of German plays into this country, which she describes as "uniting the taste of the Goths with the mo-" rals of Bagshot;"

" Gorgons and Hydra's, and Chimeras dire!"

And makes an observation, though new, yet not fact, "that those who most earnestly deny the "immortality of the soul, are most eager to in-" troduce the machinery of ghosts." The lady should be consistent. She should either not read plays, or allow them innocent; but she dispraiseth the drama, and yet publisheth dramatic works! It must be a calumny to charge the French infidels with sending us German plays, to instil the principles of *illuminism*, with a view to overturn christianity (the arts and sciences will do that!) and that Englishmen have been employed to translate French works, omitting the bolder passages, in order that the mind may be brought, though more slowly, to receive the poison at another period. She alledgeth the application of the infidels to the English males has not been so successful as wished for, and that now they apply to the ladies, to influence their sons and husbands!

"For this purpose, not only novels and romances have "been made the vehicles of vice and infidelity, but the same "allurement has been held out to the women of our coun-"try, which was employed by the first philosophists to the "first sinner—Knowledge. Listen to the precepts of the

" new German enlighteners, and you need no longer remain
" in that situation in which Providence has placed you!
" Follow their examples, and you shall be permitted to in-
" dulge in all those gratifications which custom, not reli-
" gion, has tolerated in the male sex."

Thus it would seem there is a jealousy between H. M. and the Illuminati; the one struggling to seduce the nation to a religious, and the other to a political mania. But the British are a sensible people. Mrs. More ought not to have admitted such observations. She says—

" It is not only awfully true, that since the new princi-
" ples have been afloat, *women* have been too eagerly in-
" quisitive after these monstrous compositions; but it is
" true also that, with a new and offensive renunciation of
" their native delicacy, *many women of character* make
" little hesitation in avowing their familiarity with works
" abounding with principles, sentiments, and descriptions,
" *which should not be so much as named among them.*"
" By allowing their minds to come in *contact with such*
" *contagious matter*, they are irrecoverably tainting them;
" and by acknowledging that they are actually conversant
" with such corruptions, they are exciting in others a most
" mischievous curiosity for the same unhallowed gratifica-
" tion. Thus they are daily diminishing in the young and
" the timid those wholesome scruples, by which, when a
" tender conscience ceases to be intrenched, all the subse-
" quent stages of ruin are gradually facilitated."

Mrs. More's " Strictures" seem to be calculated rather to corrupt than improve the sex. Her own mind at least is not very pure. Her strictures ought to be publicly burnt.

Ladies are again warned against the theatre (all but her own plays) and she gives (p. 49) a few

remarks on the German drama, from the admired play The STRANGER; and she forbids the ladies to see or read a play! She tells the ladies of Great-Britain and Ireland, that "*The Female "Werter*" asserts, in a work entitled "*The "Wrongs of Women*," that "adultery is justifiable, "and that the restrictions placed on it by the "laws of England constitutes one of the '*Wrongs "of Women.*" For H. More to advertise the existence of such a book, is an irremissible crime. There is no father or husband in England that will not reprobate her for it, and she cannot be considered but as a corrupter of the morals of the sex. She descants on depravity as gravely, and details its grossest acts as frigidly, as if its object were to allay the tumult of the passions, while it is letting them loose on mankind.

In p. 57, an apostrophized and *awful* address is directed to parents on this subject.

"Abuse not," says she, "so noble a quality as Chris-"tian candour, by misemploying it in instances to which "it does not apply. Pity the wretched woman you dare "not countenance; and bless HIM who has 'made you to "differ.' If unhappily she be your relation or friend, "anxiously watch for the period when she shall be deserted "by her betrayer; and see if, by your Christian offices, "she can be snatched from a perpetuity of vice. But if, "through the Divine blessing on your patient endeavours, "she should ever be awakened to remorse, be not anxious "to restore the forlorn penitent to that society against "whose laws she has so grievously offended; and remem-"ber, that her soliciting such a restoration, furnishes but too "plain a proof that she is not the penitent your partiality "would believe; since penitence is more anxious to make

" its peace with Heaven than with the world. To restore " a criminal to public society, is perhaps to tempt her to " repeat her crime, or to deaden her repentance for having " committed it, as well as to insult & to injure that society."

Reader! let *me* address thee! Is this the spirit of the religion of Jesus, which H. *professes?* Did he not command to forgive not seven, but seventy times seven? Did Jesus condemn the woman taken in adultery? When all left the room, and he asked her, (since there was not an innocent person found among her accusers to cast a stone at her; and the cruel Hannah, if she had been present, would have perhaps, convicted by her own conscience, been obliged to go out also) " Where are thine accusers? Hath no man con- " demned thee?" She said, " No man, Lord." And Jesus said unto her, " neither do I condemn " thee—go, and sin no more." Let me ask Hannah, how she would like to be so treated by society. " Patere legem quam ipse tuleris." Mrs. More is not yet brought to a sense of her sins: she has christianity yet to learn. Adultery is a great sin; but there are greater. It is more venal than " private accusations." It is more venal than many falsehoods of which she is convicted. Marvel not, Hannah, that I say, " you must be " born again." But, politically speaking, may not an adulteress reclaimed become a useful member of society, educate her children, discharge her duty to her husband and servants, and be again a mother. But driven out of society, the loss of which she has sustained perhaps by no

fault of her own, at most by the frailty of human nature, she, deserted by the virtuous part of the world, plungeth into iniquity, and debasing every virtue, losing every resemblance of the divine image, callously depraved, ends her existence in cursing that race, which, by shutting the door of human mercy against her, has taught her to despair of the divine pardon. Rigid and unrelenting virtue, is this the lesson thou teachest? No! the virtuous are always forgiving and humane. The Disciples only marvelled, like H. More, that Jesus talked with the woman; yet no man durst ask him, why talkest thou with her? But H. is bolder, who would have us *cast her out.*

Oh! Hannah! "If thou knewest the gift of "God, and who it is that saith unto thee give me "to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and "he would have given thee living water."—Mrs. More, pray always, "Lord, give me this "water (christian charity and candour) that I "thirst not, neither *come hither to draw.*"

For candour and christian charity, the waggish Peter shames thee, thou cruel Hannah!

"I cannot drag the nymph to *grinning day,*
"I cannot curse the nymph of yielding charms:
"Instead of casting the poor girl away,
"Lord! I wou'd rather clasp her in my arms!

"Hang on her lips, bestow the generous kiss;
"Catch the pure drop that leaves her liquid eye:
"And gently chiding the *unlicensed bliss,*
"Reclaim the beauteous mourner with a sigh.

" O think of love, ye ladies of *hard hearts*,
" Lo, Nature weaves it close in every cranny!
" Ev'n from OLD WOMEN rarely it departs,
" The subject sweet of many a shaking GRANNY.

" Oh, be the wounded prude who dares *reprove*,
" And furious charge the feeble MAID or DAME,
" A nymph, who, cautious of the torch of LOVE,
" Has never *singed her honour* at its flame!"

" In the meantime," the lady continues, p. 58, " there " are other evils, ultimately perhaps tending to this, into " which we are falling, through that sort of fashionable " candour which, as was hinted above, is among the mis- " chievous characteristics of the present day; of which pe- " riod perhaps it is not the smallest evil, that vices are made " to look so like virtues, and are so assimilated to them, that it " requires watchfulness and judgment sufficiently to analyze " and discriminate. There are certain women of good " fashion who practise irregularities not consistent with " the strictness of virtue; while their good sense and know- " ledge of the world make them at the same time keenly " alive to the value of reputation. They want to retain " their indulgencies, without quite forfeiting their credit; " but finding their fame fast declining, they artfully cling, " by flattery and marked attentions, to a few persons of " more than ordinary character; and thus, till they are " driven to let go their hold, continue to prop a falling fame."

One mode of doing all this, is to become a " non-descript," and write " cheap pious tracts," and " strictures on female education."

" Christianity (p. 64) driven out from the rest " of the world, has still, blessed be God! a " '*strong hold*' in this country." Is the former clause of this sentence true. Christianity is established in Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Ger-

many, Russia, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and all America. Oh! Hannah, thy "Young Levite" is surely a better historian and geographer than to tell you all this! This is not historically nor morally orthodox.

"Let that very period which is *desecrated* (this is non-"sense) in another country, by a formal renunciation of "religion, be solemnly marked by you to purposes diame-"trically opposite."

This is not true; for all religions have ever since the revolution been equally tolerated in France. But there was a time, a more *consecrated period*, a period, to restore which we have squandered hundreds of millions, and shed the blood of myriads, for which Mrs. More voted, when the pious, wise, and good Dr. Young, a christian *indeed*, could not get a grave in all France for his angel, his Narcissa,

"O'er putrid earth to scratch a little dust."

I will not in my virtuous indignation at *thee*, weak woman, call their religion accursed. No! christianity is reverence to God, and love to man.—But it has been perverted by the selfish, the designing, and, instead of a blessing, has been frequently a curse to man; and were it not for man's false education, and imposture, and for woman's false "strictures" on woman's education, would every where be man's friend. It is the non-descripts of every country, in their impious and ignorant zeal, would set man against man, and nation against nation, turning the gospel, God's best legacy to man, into lasciviousness, the motive,

cause, and object of all great crimes in Europe, for fourteen centuries.

" When persecution raised her iron crow,
" And saw, with doting eye, her pow'r display'd;
" Enjoyed the flying brains at every blow,
" And blessed the knives and hooks with which he flay'd.
" Grill'd, roasted, carbonaded, fricasseed
" Men, women, children, for the slightest things;
" Burnt, strangled, glorying in the horrid deed;
" Nay, starved and flogg'd GOD'S great VICEGE-
" RENTS, KINGS.
" No scorn now frowneth from a Bishop's eye,
" No sounds of anger from his lips escape;
" Save on a Curate's importuning sigh,
" Save on the penury of *ragged crape.*"

There was a period, when the French who witnessed this scene let fall

" Strange tears! that trickled down
" From marble hearts! obdurate tenderness!
" A tenderness that call'd them more severe;
" In spite of nature's soft persuasion, steel'd;
" While *nature* melted, *superstition* rav'd;
" *That* mourn'd the dead; and *this* deny'd a grave.
" Their sighs incens'd; sighs foreign to the will!
" Their will the *tyger* suck'd, outrag'd the storm.
" For Oh! the curst ungodliness of zeal!
" While *sinful flesh* relented, *spirit* nurst
" In blind *infallibility's* embrace,
" The *sainted spirit* petrify'd the breast;
" Deny'd the charity of dust, to spread
" O'er dust! a charity their dogs enjoy.
" What could I do? What succour? What resource?
" With pious sacrilege, a grave I stole;
" With impious piety, that grave I wrong'd;
" Short in my duty; coward in my grief!

" More like her murderer, than friend, I crept,
" With soft, suspended step, and muffled deep
" In midnight darkness, *whisper'd* my last sigh.
" I *whisper'd* what should echo thro' their realms;
" Nor writ her name, whose tomb should pierce the skies.
" Presumptuous fear! How durst I dread her foes,
" While nature's loudest dictates I obey'd?"

Would a grave now be refused in France for the remains of any human being. No! not to a non-descript. The revolution, terrible as were some of its concomitant circumstances, will be beyond a doubt, productive of good. It cannot be that so much blood should be shed, without Providence designing some amelioration of human society by it. Religious bigotry, at least, will never again darken their minds, and steel their hearts against the rights of humanity; and it is to be hoped, the people of this country will have too much good sense to be seduced to non-descript superstition by H. More, however plausible her means, who has art to make "*vice* look so like "virtue."

From the title, STRICTURES on FEMALE EDUCATION, one would expect not a censure only of the existing modes, but the suggestion, at least, of a better plan. The reigning system, she thinks, tends to weaken the principles of female virtue, by its encouragement of *vanity*, *selfishness*, and *inconsideration*; and that quality most important in an instructor of youth, she tells us (p. 69) is

" *Such a strong impression of the corruption of our*
" *nature, as should insure a disposition to counteract it;*
" *together with such a deep view and thorough knowledge*

" of the human heart, as should be necessary for deve-
" loping and controlling its most secret and complicated
" workings."

Here we see at once a scheme of mysticism, and a proof that Young and Harward would by her be considered as preferable tutors to any professor in the Universities. Now, whether man brings with him into the world a " corrupt nature " and evil dispositions," is a theological question of little use to be inculcated in our earliest years. There are innumerable other subjects to be attended to before the mind is capable of reasoning on so abstruse, sytematic, and scholastic a question as the fall of man or *woman*. That is but one question; and if our learning is to be confined to it only, we shall be non-descripts indeed. I believe no man or woman, but H. More, on sending for a writing master, would think the following the only question necessary to be asked, instead of a specimen of his writing and his terms, " Dost " thou believe the fall of man?" Or of a music or fencing master; " Dost thou believe in original " sin?" These are not the questions any person of common sense would ask a tutor for his son, or governess for his daughter. Languages must be learned, and the circle of the sciences described and perambulated, accompanied with religious instruction before any one particular system be adopted. These are the means to prepare him for the recovery *from his fall*, if he has fallen,* or to become

* See Milton on Education, and an ingenious sermon by the Rev. Dr. Whitfield.

excellent and good, if he shall be considered as a "creature of education." I fear H. More's plan, if she has formed any idea of a scheme of education, is too much calculated to superinduce, by puritanical zeal, a spiritual gloom, with an age of darkness.

The "Phrenzy of Accomplishments" is next attacked and ridiculed. She reprobates the practice of ladies learning French and other languages, unless they were sure, before they began, they should become perfectly skilled in them; and describes the awkwardness of half-gentlewomen, curates, tradesmen, and farmers daughters, who have lost their time at a boarding school, when they ought to be otherwise employed. Whether this knowledge has been attained from what passed at her own and sisters school, I know not; but Mrs. Robinson, for one, certainly improved in dramatic science, for how could she fail under so skilful a mistress as H. More.

If no man is to make a beginning, without a certainty of great progress, learning must soon be banished from the world, and every other laudable work be unattempted. "The epidemical "mania" of Sunday schools, therefore, should be cured, because, as Dr. Johnson said of the Scotch nation, "every one has a smattering, but none a "belly full." Mediocrity, one talent or two, is, according to her opinion, worse than nothing.—Pope's advice respecting poetical composition,

"Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring,"

certainly applies to herself, whose poetry does

scarcely rise to mediocrity: but all ought to attempt at learning, because a little is useful and needful, and a few among the many may distinguish themselves, and be useful to mankind. I would have all men and women taught to read and write, and every thing else they can reach at. It is thus they know themselves, and their duty to God and man. The world has been too much kept in darkness; and as we are blessed with that glorious art printing, let it be the vehicle of knowledge and happiness to the whole world. "*Vanity, selfishness, inconsideraton,*" and affectation, will certainly now and then shew themselves, and render the vain and affected ridiculous. But learning is not to be despised, because a H. More, and such, now and then pretend to write on "female education."

Her observation,

"I do not scruple to assert, that in general, as far as my "little observation has extended, this class of females, in "what relates both to religious knowledge and to practical "industry, falls short both of the very high and the very "low."

The lady's observation is not only "little," but ignorant, and she was foolish in making it; for can all attain at, has she reached excellence? "If all "were head, where were the body and the feet?" There will always be wise and foolish virgins. In this observation, H. is not among the wise ones.

"Hence the abundant multiplication of superficial wives, "and of incompetent and illiterate governesses."

Hear this, ye wives and ye governesses! How comes it that Mrs. More and her four sisters are

not wives? Were not they well prepared and sufficiently educated for that holy and happy state? Is Hannah herself a "widow bewitched, or a non-"descript wife." Ye ladies of the middling classes, you are here told that she does not write for your instruction, "but a more important class of "females;" and I suppose she, consequently, does not wish you to read her book!

Dancing is ignorantly ridiculed. I suppose she herself does not like dancing, and is of Cicero's opinion, that "Nemo fere saltat sobrius," because perhaps she never was taught, or if taught, was but a bad proficient. Dancing not only teaches to sit, stand and walk, but to act gracefully. There are beauties besides those of the face; beauties of form, of action, motion, rest. As she is so fond of inculcating the *fall of woman*, I wonder she is not more desirous the ladies should recover the graces of the body, as well as of the mind, of the primæval fair. "Grace was in all her steps," &c. I confess, for my own part, I would not like for a wife a person who could not jig, and foot it a little. I would not indeed be ambitious of her dancing on a slack-rope at the opera, or on the stage; but I think it indispensible she should be able to dance a country dance, do the Irish and Scotch steps (p. 84) and by all means "setting," after Mr. Spectator's method. I love a little music too. It adorns a woman's graces and virtues, for it charms; and those who hate it, are fit for all the dark crimes the poet enumerates, as well as for "private accusations." I dislike a timber-

tuned wife! Every woman ought assuredly to be drilled, and learn to walk, and march as well as to step and foot it: but I would not bestow on either of these teachers a "stipend that would "make the pious Curate rich and happy." As an ecclesiastic, I thank the benevolent lady; but I recollect, that but lately, she was not so very charitable to the Curate of Blagdon, whom she endeavoured to strip of his whole income. To intimidate the British ladies from cultivating the fine arts, the act is represented as a sure token of the degeneracy, fall, and speedy dissolution of the empire, and any advancement to excellence as incompatable with female virtue, ranking them with the Phrynes (p. 88) Lais's, Aspasias, and Glyceras, all women of easy access in ancient times; courtezans, the most beautiful and accomplished in the world. Ladies! throw away your pencils, and your pens also. The "fa-"mous ode of Horace" is quoted, to Mrs. Hannah's shame; for it would lead one to suspect her of being a matron; it ought never to have been metioned by her. I would not, as a man, venture to read it in her hearing, yet she herself is not ashamed to call the attention of men and women to it, to tell the public she can read and talk of what ought not to be spoken of. So gross are some poems of that great moralist Horace, that a purged edition was a few years ago published for the use of young gentlemen. The woman that would mention such a poem, or its contents, before men, would be considered, not unjustly, as offering herself. Her words are, p. 89,

" The famous ode of Horace, too gross to be either " quoted or referred to, &c."

No modest woman could write so. When I read this to Lady Mac Sarcasm, she blushed. It did not put me in mind of the " fiddling figure" of " high-toned morality," but of the " famous " Dr. Graham's figure of full-toned virility." I incline to think her Levitical friend and assistant, " kind lad," has here played a trick on Miss H. by introducing the story of the " famous ode of " Horace, which ought not to be quoted or re- " ferred to," with a view to gratify her affectation of learning at the expence of female delicacy! My wife is ashamed of it.

" The arts," she adds, " become agents of voluptuousness. " They excite the imagination; and the imagination thus " excited, and no longer under the government of strict " principle, becomes the most dangerous stimulant of the " passions; promotes a too keen relish for pleasure, teach- " ing how to multiply its sources, and inventing new and " pernicious modes of artificial gratification."

To this I would answer, that degeneracy is not to be expected at least from our sailors; for as long as a midshipman may by merit rise to peer- age and the highest command, so long will emu- lation and an active spirit exist. It is not so in the army, where every step is purchased. This island will always flourish. Stabit quocunque jeceris. We have the commerce of the world, and manufactures ought to be encouraged. As to the form and mode of dress, that is always, and always will and ought to be changing. Mac

Laurin says the use of the mechanic powers makes the difference between the civilized and savage state. Ought we not to wear the produce of our manufactures? To cavil at the cut of a man's coat, or the shape and fashion of a woman's robe, is as childish and absurd a *habit* of mind in the self-elected sumptuary censor, as the style of dress can be supposed to be extravagant and fantastic in the people. Nature ought to be assisted and directed. If it be desirable and practicable, by any speculative and theological doctrine that a system-monger should fabricate, to attain or recover that degree of purity, that rendered all *costume* unnecessary to the first pair, let Mrs. More set the example of going naked, without being ashamed. What deformities of person might then appear, when she shall have exposed herself will be known; but, unfortunately for her mental costume, cunning and artfulness have uniformly been of consistence not sufficiently dense, though strongly wove, to conceal the distortions and depravities of the heart; " private accusations." " Not read Athanasian creed these seven years." " He is a socinian, and a jacobin." " I will have " him turned out of the curacy, deprived of his " living, and unfrocked."

Whatever may be said of Mrs. More's person; by her allusions to the " famous ode of Horace," and her " agents of voluptuousness," " exciting " the imagination," " stimulants of the passions," &c. &c. her mind and imagination certainly are

far from pure, having apparently waded through many a dirty lane to acquire experience.

Hired Teachers (p. 97) are universally reprobated, as having an immediate interest in, and deriving a rich and present crop from "not caring "how much the ground is impoverished for fu- "ture produce;" and parents are recommended to look to "permanent value, and continued fruit- "fulness." If French, Italian, music, and dancing masters charge high for their lessons, it is certainly far more reasonable than the expence of having a set of these professors in every school, and in every family. These gentlemen owe no obligation to Miss Hannah. In case some super- or sub-orthodox parent, or non-descript governess, should hereafter receive Mrs. More's crite rion of "*qualifications for instructors*," she would do well to write a forma, or catechism for music and dancing masters, that they may know how to answer parents and governesses, when they enquire into their faith, and fitness for giving lessons on the piano-forte, or the Scotch and Irish steps. This will be one *step* in proselytism, and securing and adding fiddlers, at least, to the society of non-descripts.

In every page, as my author advanceth, she more and more proves, that to make a book, rather than to furnish a plan of useful education, is her only object. Even children's balls furnish her with matter for some pages, but they are pages of folly, if not inanity. If children are to

learn to dance, they ought to dance together in numbers; and in a ball there can be no impropriety, but protracting it to too late an hour. It is always easier to censure, than correct or propose a better method; and this is uniformly verified in H. More.

Under the greatest alarm at "the evils we are "sustaining from *modern* France (p. 105) we for-"get," she says, "those we were systematically "importing under the old government;" and she is almost in hysterics lest governesses from that country should privately instil some opinions into their mind, and teach their pupils some pretty manual evolutions of catholic institution, although not long since she informed us, that, by law, all religion was abolished in France!

These alarms, at the same time they help to fill her volume, to answer a political purpose also, shew her mind is sick or depraved. But to be just and impartial, what have we which came not from France? Were not the French before us a free people? Ought we to blame them for endeavouring to recover their liberties? Did not we receive our very parliaments from that country? Are not our language and laws mixt with theirs? Have we not our best wines from them? Have they not civilized Europe, and rendered even the horrors of war more tolerable? I grant their enormities and crimes; but I would not deliberately tell a falsehood of them or of Mrs. More. The danger to religion is nothing but affectation, or a desire that non-descripts should be univer-

sally our teachers (for if we believe her, the education of the infant Princess of Wales is directed by her) chosen by the grand test of the " original " corruptions of human nature ;" and this belief so easily assumed, so frequently the cloak of knavery, a succedaneum for all the virtues, is, in instructors, to supply the place of all learning.

Mrs. More! Mankind and womankind will dance and sing, to all which you declare yourself an enemy, and smile and laugh, and eat and drink, and be merry (for there will be evils enough, without allowing you to keep them in your Trophonius's cave) and at proper seasons I hope they will pray, preach, and sing psalms too, whatever feeble dissuasives your unstable principles may propose. In hopes that it may do you good, I will here sing you a song, for, every hour this and every day of my life, I have either enunciatively prayed, or mentally lifted up my soul, to those regions where I hope one day *magora canere ;* and I have no reason to be sad while the Omnipotent reigneth, while I avoid " private accusations," and such naughty doings, and professing religion, more for the profession's sake than the practice. Alms-deeds are a very humble part of charity! Allons! Chantons!

Come gie 's a song, Sir Archy cry'd,
And lay your disputes a' aside;
What nonsense is 't for folks to chide
For what 's been done before them.
Let Whig and Tory all agree,
Whig and Tory, Whig and Tory,
Let Whig and Tory all agree
To drop their Whigmymorums;

Let Whig and Tory all agree
To spend the night wi' mirth and glee,
And cheerfu' sing alang wi' me
The reel of Tullochgorum.

O! Tullochgorum's my delight,
It mak's us a' in ane unite;
And any sumph that keeps up spite,
In conscience I abhor him.
For blythe and cheary we 'll be a,'
Blythe and cheary, blythe and cheary,
Blythe and cheary we 'll be a,'
And make a happy quorum.
For blythe and cheary we 'll be a,'
As lang as we hae breath to draw,
And dance till we be like to fa,'
The reel of Tullochgorum.

What need there be sae great a phrase
Wi' dringing dull Italian lays,
I wou'd na gie our ain Strathspeys
For half a hundred score o' 'm.
They 're douff and dowie at the best,
Douff and dowie, douff and dowie,
They 're douff and dowie at the best,
Wi' a' their variorums;
They 're douff and dowie at the best,
Their allegro's and a' the rest,
They canna please a Scottish lass,
Compared wi' Tullochgorum.

Let wardly worms their minds oppress
Wi' fear of want and double 'sess,
And sullen sots themselves distress
Wi' keeping up decorum.
Shall we sae sour and sulky sit,
Sour and sulky, sour and sulky,
Shall we sae sour and sulky sit,
Like auld Philosophorums;

Shall we sae sour and sulky sit,
Wi' neither sense, nor mirth, nor wit,
And never try to shake a fit
To the reel of Tullochgorum.

May choicest blessings aye attend
Each honest-hearted open friend,
And calm and quiet be her end,
And a' that 's gude watch o'er her.
May peace and plenty be her lot,
Peace and plenty, peace and plenty,
Peace and plenty be her lot,
And dainties a great store o' 'em;
May peace and plenty be her lot,
Unstained by any vicious blot,
And may she never want a groat
That 's fond of Tullochgorum.

But for the sour and frumpish fool,
Who wants to be oppression's tool,
May envy gnaw her rotten soul,
And discontent devour her.
May dole and sorrow be her chance,
Dole and sorrow, dole and sorrow,
May dole and sorrow be her chance,
And nane say "wae 's me" for her;
May dole and sorrow be her chance,
Wi' a' the ills that come frae France,
Whoe'er she be that winna dance
The reel of Tullochgorum.

I was indeed about to observe, and it is generally true of her, that the author finds fault with the whole of modern education, and seems well inclined to abolish it; but like the republican, who would pull down every government without knowing what to erect in its room, she never informs us what the plan of instruction should be, excepting that she descants on the "corruption

" of human nature." Yet I will do her the justice to quote with approbation, although she has not contrasted fairly, a sentence worth all the rest of her strictures on education; for I am certainly of Sallust's opinion, that I would not choose quite a Sempronia, nor am I like the Numidians, who among a plurality could find " nulla amica."

" When a man of sense comes to marry, it is not merely " a creature who can paint, and play and sing, and draw, " and dress, and dance, he wants; it is a being who can " comfort and counsel him; one who can reason, and re- " flect, and feel, and judge, and discourse, and discriminate; " one who can assist him in his affairs, lighten his cares, " soothe his sorrows, purify his joys, strengthen his princi- " ples, and educate his children."

To make Penelope's of all our dames, by employing themselves in spinning, and making webs to clothe their husbands and families, is a proposal and recommendation very absurd from Mrs. More, who must know, that though in some parts of the kingdom this is still certainly practised, yet in the Southern counties it is impracticable. For it is cheaper to purchase. This business is now generally in the hands of manufacturers. She might as well recommend it to the ladies to do as their great grandmothers did, make their own candles, which is now contrary to law.

Upon my estate in the North this is still the custom; and I well remember, that when I first went to college, my mother made me a " coat of " divers colours."

In chap. 6, of 7th vol. Mrs. More, with some light matter, gives some not injudicious observations respecting " *early habits.*"

The 8th chap. on "*Female Study*," is a chapter to tell us of the author's scattered knowledge of the title, and sometimes the contents, of books; it is a chapter of contradictions. The instructor is left to choose proper school books for their pupils; and immediately she makes a selection for her. At one time all learning is to be got by smooth measures; and then she tells us, that there is no idle or primrose path to "any acqui-"sitions that deserve the name." Religion very justly is never lost sight of, and that, like learning, is introduced merely to talk about it. The "profusion of little sentimental works," to which she has so abundantly contributed, with which the libraries of youth overflows, she is apprehensive may serve to "infuse into the youthful heart "a spurious goodness, a confidence of virtue, and "a *parade of charity*." The "*precocity* of mind" produced by such a mode of education, forced in the hot-bed of circulating libraries, is inveighed against; and all works of imagination, not founded on "christian story and principles," are disapproved of. "*Abridgments, beauties, and compen-*"*diums*," are considered as "a receipt for form-"ing a superficial mind;" and because the best written books have much superfluous matter in them, she says, they who abridge voluminous works judiciously, "deserve well of the commu-"nity." Instead of books of English sentiment, French philosophy, Italian love songs, and the magic wonders of German imagery, she would have the ladies substitute Locke on the Human

Understanding, and Butler's Analogy (p. 215) with Watts's or Duncan's Logic, and she ought to have added one of the best books in the world, Watts's Improvement of the Mind. But as she has often gutted the fish (a Bishop's dory) which another caught, that she may not charge me with doing her injustice, let her serve up some of her "plaice."

"Serious study serves to harden the mind for more trying conflicts; it lifts the reader from sensation to intellect; it abstracts her from the world and its vanities; it fixes a wandering spirit, and fortifies a weak one; it divorces from matter; it corrects that spirit of trifling which she naturally contracts from the frivolous turn of female conversation, and the petty nature of female employments; it concentrates her attention, assists her in a habit of excluding trivial thoughts; and thus even helps to qualify her for religious pursuits."

Whilst Mrs. More professes the disinclination to make ladies *school-women*, and skilled in dialetics on the one hand, nor novel writers on the other, for any girl by reading three novels may herself, she says, produce a fourth; she wishes them, however, to study scholastic theology.—Forgetful of her sister's novels, and her own "small beginnings" in life, she, not without cruelty and some injustice, observes—

"Is a lady, however destitute of talents, education, or knowledge of the world, whose studies have been completed by a circulating library, in any distress of mind? the writing a novel suggests itself as the best soother of her sorrows! Does she labour under any depression of circumstances? writing a novel occurs as the readiest receipt for mending them! And she solaces

" her imagination with the conviction that the subscription " which has been extorted by her importunity, or given to " her necessities, has been offered as an homage to her ge- " nius. And this confidence instantly levies a fresh contri- " bution for a succeeding work. Capacity and cultivation " are so little taken into the account, that writing a book " seems to be now considered as the only sure resource " which the idle & the illiterate have always in their power."

" *Let her who is innocent cast the first stone.*" What said the *pot* to the *kettle!* I feel the indignant temper of the Sarcasm family roused in me; and if I cannot apply to Mrs. More " *sugar hogs-* " *heads and rum puncheons,*" I can ask, whether she and her sisters did not begin business with the produce of a *subscription?* I have known more than one amiable female, who wrote a novel to raise subsistence for a father, mother and sisters, all of whom would reprobate the practice of Miss " Moon," " *private accusations;*" and the same feelings which then induced me to recommend the books to the public, by stating privately the application of the produce, to some literary censors, force even now, as I re-enjoy the long ago past pleasure, the tears to run down my hoary cheeks. Madam! my family is ancient; my motto is Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos; and, though I respect the merit which in the law, army, navy, or the church, raises a man to peerage and dignity, I hate that upstart pride, which attempts to make Joan a gentlewoman, intellectual imbecility a Johnson; a Lilliputian in literature a Patagon.

"Miss Hannah's graces dazzle not the view—
"No bonfire she—no sun's meridian blaze:—
"A *rushlight* 'midst th' illuminating FEW;
"A *farthing rushlight*, with its winking rays.

"Miss HANNAH has no eagle wing to flee,
"Whom thus some adulation can befool:
"Alas! a poor Ephemeron is SHE!
"A *humming* NATIVE of a Bristol pool.

"Had WISDOM crush'd Miss HANNAH's forward quill,
"Had silence put a gag on HANNAH's tongue—
"No crape had mourn'd upon the Muse's hill,
"Nor Phœbus blubber'd for the loss of song.

"People shou'd not run riot with applause,
"But ah! how many praise without pretence;
"Bawl for a work with wide extended jaws;
"Of words a *deluge*, and a *drop* of sense.

"Though HANNAH's prose presents us nothing new—
"Though HANNAH's verse be lame insipid stuff;
"Some *sable* CRITIC, in some kind Review,
"Shall give the little paper-kite a *puff*.

"I'll tell the public, what, Miss HANNAH's strictures
"Are decent things—perhaps Miss HANNAH's plan;
"But trust me, they are all some PARSON's pictures,
"These, HANNAH never *drew*, nor *coloured*, ——!

"Miss HANNAH may be aptly term'd a *hen*,
"Who sits on PHEASANT's eggs, to kindness prone;
"Hatches the birds, a pretty brood; but then,
"Weak vanity! She calls the chicks *her own*.

"Miss HANNAH's heels are greasy, let me say;
Miss HANNAH's joints are very stiff *indeed*:
"Her form is rather fitted for the *dray*,
"Than on NEWMARKET turf to show a speed.

"Then bid Miss HANNAH MORE her pen confine:
"Repress the vainly rhyming, prosing rage,
"That makes us sinful damn the nerveless line,
"Un-Job-like curse the pen'ry of the page.

" Now, ladies, don't be in a passion,
" Because I've treated in such fashion
" Miss HANNAH, whom you idolize and foster:
" I do assure you, SOLEMN DAMES,
" Miss HANNAH with no merit *flames*,
" No! She's a *little bit* of an *impostor*.
" I know you call the nymph, the sun so bright:
" Now, she's MISS MOON—and borroweth all her *light*.

" Who has not seen a kind old mother CAT
" Deliver a dead bird, or mouse, or rat,
" To her young kitten, Miss GRIMALKIN?
" Miss catches it with raptur'd claws,
" Locks it at once within her jaws,
" Round with *cock'd tail*, and round, triumphant walking;
" So carefully her treasure holding, watching,
" And proudly purring 'this is all *my catching*.'
" Has not Miss HANNAH been the kitten here?
" Too strongly she resembles it, I fear!

" Miss HANNAH, too, a LUCKY lift has had
" On some kind PRIEST's—*perchance a Bishop's pad!*
" Miss Hannah's work so much beprais'd,
" By flattery's puff so highly rais'd;—
" I say Miss HANNAH's pretty EDUCATION book,
" Of fishing party's starts a story,
" Where one shall steal another's trout or dory,
" And slily pull it in on his own hook.

" Now, LADIES, as your honours are at stake,
" I beg you for your reputation sake,
" To sift this petty larceny of the pen;
" And as ye probably may find it out,
" Confront Miss HANNAH—kick up some small rout—
" And make her give the man his fish again."

Mrs. More, p. 229, vol. 7, declares herself of opinion, that the flattering accounts given by our circumnavigators of the mild and amiable disposition of the inhabitants of new-discovered countries, and particularly the Hindoos, and the Pellew Islands,

are expressly given with the design of counteracting the doctrine of human corruption, and destroying the necessity of Christ's sacrifice of satisfaction. The atonement is an established doctrine, which I will by no means gainsay or impugn. But I will not neglect, in this place to point out what I am sure all who have perused her book must have observed, *the studious anxiety with which she, on every occasion, brings this subject before her reader's eye.* She seems to consider all as unbelievers who do not receive this doctrine. Let us be just. Let reason and the scriptures decide. She ought to know that many who deny it, nevertheless, believe the divine mission, life and immortality being brought to light by Christ, the resurrection from the dead unto eternal life, and the immortality of the soul and future judgment, and consider themselves no less christians than if they believed this doctrine. Nay, even those who deny the Trinitarian doctrine altogether, insist that they are christians; and they argue, that the word Trinity is not to be found in the scriptures, nor will they allow the corruption of human nature, nor the atonement, to be proved by scripture. Charity! charity! charity! The love the first christians had for one another extracted from the heathens the apostrophe; How these christians love one another! Do modern christians love one another? Let H. More and Sir A. Elton's conduct in the Blagdon controversy bear witness.

Some pages are occupied by common place observations on the ways and doctrine of Providence, which explain and account for various events in the history of nations and individuals, and are all shown to promote the great ends and objects of the divine administration, proving, from the frequent success of vice, and the depressions of virtue, the certainty of a future state. This is a specimen of the mode in which she recommends history to be read to pupils by governesses.

But above all knowledge, *self* knowledge is again expatiated upon; and individual *self denial* recommended, by historical interrogatories. The fair are asked, whether they never "carry about "with them a convenient religion, which accom- "modates itself to places and seasons; which is "decent with the pious, sober with the orderly, "and loose with the licentious?" Whether, while with patriotic indignation she inveighs against *thirty* theatres in *Paris*, well attended every night, she may not miss an evening at one of the *three* in *London*, during our public calamities by war? Will Mrs. More say her own religion is not a very convenient one, and that her conscience is not perfectly elastic, which permit her to write plays, and to write against plays; to write against the theatre, and yet re-publish her plays? Surely this is a most glaring inconsistency, this is hypocrisy with a vengeance! Need the world wonder she should "privately accuse" honest men, or be guilty of almost any other vice?

A chapter is devoted to "*Definitions*," and it teaches as much of that as it does of roasting eggs.

I am decidedly of the same opinion with Mrs. More, against those who recommend that christianity should not be taught to children. Many argue that the scriptures ought not to be a school book. I think otherwise. The objection, that familiarity with so sacred a book produceth future neglect and contempt, is not well founded. I know the contrary to be true. When children become men and go into the world, they are not likely to make that book a study. By reading it early, the historical part, and the miracles, make an impression never to be obliterated. It is there we have the most ancient theory of the earth, and the most authentic history of the primæval state of the world; there is contained the most perfect system of ethics, the purest legislation, the most rational induction of natural religion, an exemplification of the ways of God with man, and the words of eternal life revealed. But I certainly would not, like her, teach a child any part of what is called the "system." The distinguishing characteristics of establishments and sects, will be learned in manhood; a catholic way of worshipping God, and "serving him only," inculcating charity to all men, constantly dwelling on the "great and first, the new commandment," is most rational, intelligible, scriptural, and superlatively useful. Of system, it will be enough to teach the catechism of the church of England, than which I know no compend more rational and excellent, and so free from system. I totally disagree with her, however, that the "youth or

" young lady should be taught to hug prejudices, " rather than acquire that versatile, accommo- " dating citizenship of the world, by which he " may be an infidel at Paris, a papist at Rome, " and a mussulman at Cairo." To overcome prejudices is an hard and difficult study; and of whatever application and diligence Mrs. More may have been capable, or have employed to enable her to produce the work, with or without the aid of others, which goes by her name, it will not be uncharitable to say, that she has not yet studied at the feet of Jesus, that there is more system and " nasty heresy," than of the " new command- " ment" in her religion, that she is rather influenced by the "pride of human wisdom," than led by affection to be " early at the tomb." Of the versatility she describes, there have been but few instances of individuals in the world; and he who cannot worship God at Paris, Rome, or Cairo, will but coldly worship him in London. The writer of this blesseth God that if he has learned but little, he has, however, learned this, and he dares avow it, that he has long since overcome all prejudice, nay even against non-descript bigotry, that he could and would worship God in Notre Dame, St. Peters, or while the grand Mufti of Cairo was officiating in the house of Rimnon, or even in H. More's non-descript meeting, with the same fervency as in St. Pauls. Is he " the " God of the Jews and not of the Gentiles also." But for all this, I respect order, decency, liberality, true piety, establishment, and good government,

which with might and main I will ever defend. Invective is no argument. At Paris there are many as good christians as at London; and I must repeat it again, that Mrs. More's religion is bigotry, likely to do more mischief than good to the world; and did I absolutely believe her to be the author of the work I am now considering, I should be provoked to say, that she is less pious than knavish. She seems to possess that spirit of bigotry, which in all ages detracted from the amiableness and liberality of the priestly character, which taught man to hate man, and produced so much evil in Europe, & lately so much misery in France. I allow no doctrine that circumscribes the mercies of God; there is no *method* of gaining eternal life but by "doing justice, loving mercy, and walk-"ing humbly with him," and the belief and practice of this rule supersedeth the excellence of every form or scheme sanctioned by ukases, decrees of Popes, councils even œcumenical, or by parliaments themselves, however omnipotent, because it is the word of God himself. "Miss Moon!" I vow, though you have had a pair of good black rolling eyes, and I love black eyes, I would rather, cæteris paribus, supposing Lady Mac Sarcasm buried, marry a brunette, a Mussulwoman from Cairo than you; because we could together adore the same God, the God that made the "heavens "and the earth," "in various style and strains "unmeditated;" who made the people of all nations, the revolutionary Parisians, and the Nondescripts; and we should love one another too, shewing no wish to prevent others from being

happy here and hereafter; believing, as we would, that God is "verily no respecter of persons; but "that in every nation he that feareth him, and "worketh righteousness, is accepted of him."

An infidel at Paris! Hannah! here you was not half cunning, and versatility and craft are the predominant features in your character. Such phrases ought not to have disgraced your pages! Did you not foresee that there would, and must be "friend-"ship and amity" between our King and the Chief Consul of the "Infidels?" Have not our brave soldiers, and several "fine fellows" from off my estate among them, fought in the same cause, and under the same banner, with the Turkish infidels; and did not you know that there are treaties of "friendship and alliance" between the Defender of the Faith and the Defender of the Infidels, and of the false Prophet? Surely you have lost all your prudence and discretion, for which you are remarkable! You are a bad subject I am afraid; I do not mean to his Majesty, or to Mr. Pitt. I should be glad to reclaim you from your non-descript ways; and I am of opinion, were we acquainted, I might *do something*, though I fear you are too old to mend. Lady Mac Sarcasm shall, however, I am determined, soon wait on you, and we shall become acquainted; and as you are something of a virago, as I perceive from your own and other books, I expect you will reason unlike "other women," without insisting "it is so because it is," but dialetically; and if I shall be happy enough to get you to "recant your

" wicked errors," and be "restored and recon-
" ciled," according to the canon, there will be much joy on the recovery of a " stray sheep."

We are assured (p. 275) that it is reasonable " we should in christianity, as in arts and sciences, " or languages, begin with the beginning, set out " with the simple elements, and thus go on to " perfection." Though, for the reasons I have already given, my opinion is, that children should from infancy be taught religious duties, yet I do not hesitate to say, that the lady and her doctor, whoever he be, are mistaken, when they say " Christianity is a science." A knowledge of natural religion, if it has not descended from Adam, may be attained by investigation and reasoning; but in christianity there is no induction, otherwise there was no necessity for a Messiah. The great teacher of christianity never begins with first principles, runs into no abstraction or metaphysical disquisitions. The sermons of Jesus, in no instance, resemble a gradual progress, advancing step by step till a regular series of conclusions is established. Many of his discourses, in the fragments of them which have been preserved, begin with a redoubled *verily*, not only importing the consequence and utility of the doctrine he is about to deliver, but principally the infallible knowledge he had of it. His discourses were all occasional, generally consisting of precepts and aphorisms, as rules of conduct, having all a singular aptitude to existing circumstances, and the capacity of those to whom they were

addressed. In the gospel there is no system. System has been raised from christianity, not christianity from system. It is distressing to find the endeavours of this lady to purify herself from her former "evil works," the drama, fruitless. She cannot illustrate a christian thesis, without the assistance of the "*very principle of Dogberry*, at "which," she adds, "we have all probably "laughed." Thus she cannot get forward to her Canaan, without looking back at her former *scenes*, the flesh pots of Egypt.

In p. 282, christianity is again considered as a science, and a reformation at death held as impracticable as to study mathematics; it is to "learn the totally unknown scheme of chris-"tianity." This certainly is a wrong notion of the gospel. Then follow many pages of redundant preaching, and impalpable inanity.

P. 315, we are told that

"Youth should be taught that as humility is the discri-"minating characteristic of our religion, therefore a proud "Christian, a haughty disciple of a crucified Master, fur-"nishes perhaps a stronger opposition in terms than the "whole compass of language can exhibit. They should "be taught that humility being the appropriate grace of "Christianity, is precisely the thing which makes Chris-"tian and Pagan virtues *essentially* different."

We have here a fruitless attempt at philological learning, and are told the Romans had no word for humility, but what was used in a "bad sense;" and it is erroneously inferred, that humility was no virtue till made so by christianity. Nego

consequentian et argumentum. Humilitas, a humilis, a *humus*, the *ground*, the English of which is humility, humble, for *humus* is not yet anglicized. But we have corresponding words in English, viz. low, *or on the ground;* lowly, *humilis;* lowliness, *humilitas*. These words are of general sense, and their particular significations arise from their application; for the abstract substantives, humility, *humilitas*, i. e. lowliness, are equally indicative of the position of body and mind. These words had existence before christianity; for if they had not, and a virtue formerly unknown to human nature were introduced by it, it would have been mentioned by its appropriate term. Humilitas is used by Cicero, as relating to *mind;* humilis, *base, mean, dwarfish*. To prove this, if it be denied that lowly, *humble;* lowliness, *humbleness, humility;* apply not to the mind, search the bible, and there lowly, as a virtue, frequently occurs. It also occurs in the gospel, and when these books were translated, it clearly appears that our language had a word for the scriptural virtue, viz. "*lowly*." The Greek, the Roman language, and the English, had all a primitive of their own, from which the adjective, and the abstract substantive were formed or derived, and first applied to body, and afterwards, as men philosophized, to *mind*. The Apostle in the Greek was explicit, when he added to ταπεινος, φρονων, thus, ταπεινο-φρονων, humilitas mentis, lowliness of mind.

PRIDE is a root in our language (and an evil root it is) but the Greek, as well as the Latin,

has a compound word for it, viz. ὑπερφανια, *supercilium*. Even *superbia* is a derivative.

Her doctor might have furnished her with a better argument for christianity.

If the Romans, who are falsely charged with giving to *humilitas* & *humilis* no intellectual meaning, used it only in a "bad sense," the British senate, army and navy, are blamed for giving *pride* a good meaning. A "proud day," "proud event," a "proud success;" although our commanding officers piously enough ascribed their victory to "Almighty God," our author does not consider it as sufficiently "evangelical;" and she thinks the swift sailing vessel that brought the dispatches, ought to have waited till a better word could have been coined, on an occasion "which has preserved "that religion which sets its foot on the neck of "pride!" It is impossible not to repeat epithets lately applied to her religion, "bloody piety." Mrs. More is *no christian*. The doctrine she wishes to inculcate, though she endeavours to conceal it, is a *mystical, unintelligible faith;* and she seems rather to believe that Christ came to "send a sword," than "peace" on the earth; and that that holy religion which has been often in the mouths of knaves as peace, while war and cruelty were in their hearts, is not to exist in the world by its own excellence, and the superintendence of God, without nations combining to seal it with blood, and proclaim its peaceful doctrines, "its "new commandment" to the nations, with anathematizing canons, and cannons of every calibre.

Were it not the fear of disgracing the "religion "of good will," and the honour of the family of the Sarcasms, my pride would lead me to say something she would not like to read; but I will not expose my family's temper, for, as my brother Sir A. Elton said, while he was writing a book, "I do not defend myself," I will not defend christianity with any other weapon than the tongue or the pen. I will rather, as I really do, for a hundred reasons, pity her. This lady seems perfectly prepared for a crusade, and to erect the labarum as a signal of blood. This she has already attempted, by imputing disaffection to her system to a liege son of the church as a crime, and appointed "a disciple of her own in his place."

But pride is frequently the motive to many a good action; and it often suggests bad ones. Pride, an honest pride, the pride of maintaining the reputation of integrity, induced Mr. Bere to present her and Sir Abraham Elton, her good and faithful ally in persecution and cruelty, before the tribunal of the public; and it was pride, a mistaken, ignorant, and wicked pride, that has rendered her contumaciously mute, yet indefatigably diligent in privately directing her runners, and by her friends influencing others, to "contradict "and give the lie to him in public advertise-"ments;" when if it were possible to palliate her guilt, she ought herself to have come forward and defended that factitious, literary, and religious character, she had acquired by the rhime-and-prose-ambling-nag, as it appears, of others.

The last chap. of vol. 7, is occupied by a *Scheme of Prayer*. Respectable mention is made of the liturgy of the church of England; but the forma, here proposed, is that of the directory of the assembly of divines at Westminster—and its division is that into which prayer naturally resolves itself. The heads are, as usual, *adoration, confession, petition, thanksgiving, intercession.* By storing up in the memory the phrases and texts of scripture, the child, in time, is expected to be able to pray, I suppose extempore, i. e. without any prepared form. The word *extempore* is not used in this chapter, but the object evidently is to learn to pray without a pre-conceived form. I mention this so particularly, on account of the Blagdon controversy, wherein the word *extempore* has been much bandied about, brought as a criminal charge against her, and denied by her organs, her creatures under her eye, for she is herself contumaciously mute. Now, although I am myself of the church, I confess, I think repeating a pre-conceived form of prayer no just charge against a christian or a heathen. To hear a learned, judicious, and pious minister pray, which every minister in the church who knows his duty and profession ought to be able to do, when circumstances make it convenient & necessary, from his store "of old things and new," is delightful to the heart of every truly pious person. Are there not respectable protestant churches established by law who use no liturgy? Were there not various missals used in different dioceses, in times of

popery? We had them in usum Sarum, &c. &c. The exercises of that sort, sometimes pre-conceived, and by long and constant practices generally extemporaneous, performed by a Doctor Robertson, a Blair, a Campbell, a Leechman, a Dalrymple, a Doddridge, a Lardner, a Kippis, a Rees, and a Hunter, all of them an honour to their country, and ornaments to their profession, being elegant, pure, and pious, can be an object of derision only to the ignorant or the impious. That man, or minister, who cannot pray without book, is not only ignorant of his profession, be he in or out of the church, but of genuine religion. I conceive every man prays several times a day; and I imagine he will not wait till a book is brought. There is not an hour of the day passes but I put up some prayer. "Sursum corda!" When I open my eyes, it is my heaven to pray; when I dress, eat, drink, stand, or sit, I put up some petition, or return thanks for some mercy; and I always fall asleep perhaps in the middle of some secret prayer. And I confess, I am far from thinking myself one of the best christians, or without many faults and infirmities, and this poor Lady Mac Sarcasm very well knows, and often reminds me of it. But it is when I walk or ride out alone, or climb some fair hill, and prospects delightful as Elysian arise to my view, that I enjoy the raptures of the blessed: I am all praise and adoration, and I seem to long for the day when I shall call the treasures of eternity my own, form a juster idea of the universe and the attributes of God,

and revel in the plenitude of bliss. Sometimes viewing his works, lost in wonder, I say with the poet,

"Come then, expressive silence, muse his praise."

Now my reader may call me an enthusiast if he likes; but I deny it; I read the liturgy according to authority; but there is no oath of conformity that does, or can, or shall forbid me this secret converse with my God.

Now to this right I think every man is entitled, and this I think the wise and the humblest may and ought to practise individually. But if a member of the church will publicly pray to a congregation by extemporaneous, or rather without any forms, I think such a person ought to secede, take a license, and, as a dissenter, be protected by law. I do not approve of ignorant persons praying to a congregation without a form committed to memory. When this is the case, there is danger of enthusiasm and extravagance. It was H. More's fault, while she declared herself of the church, to encourage these practices in an injudicious manner. King Charles the martyr, in Eikon Basilikon, ascribed to him, allowed of private devotion in the manner I have described, but was a steady friend to the liturgy in public, for which he died a martyr under the axe of the ancient non-descripts, whose system Mrs. Hannah is most indefatigably resuscitating.

VOL. VIII.

THE 8th vol. contains observations to ladies on the management of their household, and on practical affairs. Arithmetic is recommended, as necessary to œconomy, and her opinion is enforced by the authority of Dr. Johnson, who said that "*a woman cannot have too much arithmetic.*" Young ladies are warned against becoming authors, until they have read much and studied long; as thereby, instead of coming forward too soon, vainly boasting of their early genius, their works will prove less defective, and they themselves more humble and diffident! Study is more earnestly recommended, because the more learned the woman, the more nearly will they approximate an equality with the men. Smatterers, therefore, have no pretensions to this rank; it is "higher "minds" (such as herself!) who are worthy of co-operation and competition with the male sex.

Mrs. More draws a parallel between the woman of personal beauty, and the woman who possesses beauties of the mind. The beautiful woman exerts herself to be a beauty, a queen, for life; whilst the female of wit and learning, combats patriotically for the whole sex, destroying all distinction, and abrogating every Salique law, which renders man superior to and head of the woman; and enthroning women, every where making them queens, to govern the men.

" I'll prove, ye fair, that, let us have our swing,
" We can, as well as men, do any thing;
" Nay better too, perhaps—for now and then,
" These times produce some bungling among men.
" The men, who grant not much, allow us charms—
" Are eyes, shapes, dimples, then, our only arms?
" In spite of lordly wits—with force and ease,
" Can't we write plays, *damn Curates when we please!*"

Our author, however, professes herself to be pleased with her allotted station, and to be ambitious only to fill her " appropriated niche;" to be the " best thing of her own kind," rather than an inferior of an higher order; and to be an excellent woman, rather than an indifferent man.—She wishes women to disclaim that something more than nature bestows, and books can teach, Viz. " that consummate knowledge of the world, to " which a delicate woman has no fair avenues, and which, " even if she could attain, she would never be supposed to " come honestly by."

In summing the evidence of the comparison of the sexes, she ventures to assert, that " women " have equal *parts* with the men, but that they " are inferior as to *mind!*" She continues, puritanically and democratically, to comfort herself, that whatever difference nature may have made in the rank of the sexes, that " at least in Christ " Jesus they are *equal*, in whom is no ' rich nor " poor, bond nor free,' *male nor female!*"

Whatever she has read, and she must be allowed to have read many books, she, by a reference to the authors, endeavours to bring forwards, not as quotations, but as if furnished by

her own mind, and sometimes her memory, making a literary and pedantic parade. In conversation she does not wish the ladies to "take the "lead in metaphysical disquisitions, theological "polemics,

"And find no end in wand'ring mazes lost?

"In the Bangorian controversy, the seven pro-"positions between the Jesuits and Jansenists, "to occupy the professor's chair," to "criticize "by Quintilian's rules, or to regulate a dramatic "piece by *Aristotle's clock*," to be

"Discurs de bons mots, fades caracteres."

But she takes care that her reader or hearer shall not escape without being told that she herself, if not equal to man, is at least a *virago*, "the "best thing of her own kind," by mentioning the words *metaphysical disquisitions*, *Bangorian controversy* (it is a pity the *Blagdon controversy* had not then existed) *Jesuits and Jansenists*, *Quintilian's* scales, *Aristotle's clock!*

The innumerable instances of inconsistency which an attentive and consistent reader will meet with in perusing Mrs. More's works, are the most convincing proof that the lady wrote, not because she could, but because the Cacoethes Scribendi was "upon her;" like the non-descript in his prayer, who begins a sentence, and trusts to Providence for the period, she proceeds without method or object, but writes a paragraph and wanders, nobody, no not even herself, knows where, for materials for the next. I follow her pages, I have no other thread; and wherever she

has culled a few flowers, I smell to them as I go along, being desirous of bringing her boneless pages, for the benefit of my reader, into the most compressed state; and to find wheat where there is so much chaff, is not easy.

I have frequently heard it observed, that it is ill-bred to discuss theological doctrines in company, and as often, that the introduction of politics ought to be avoided. Our author says—

"As in the momentous times in which we live it is next "to impossible to pass an evening in company but the talk "will so inevitably revert to politics, that, without any pre- "meditated design, every one present shall infallibly be able "to find out to which side the other inclines; why, in the "far higher concern of eternal things, should we so care- "fully shun every offered opportunity of bearing even a "casual testimony to the part we espouse in religion? "Why, while we make it a sort of point of conscience to "leave no doubt on the mind of a stranger, whether we "adopt the party of Pitt or Fox, shall we chuse to leave it "very problematical whether we belong to God or Baal? "Why, in religion, as well as in politics, should we not act "like people who, having their all at stake, cannot forbear "now and then adverting for a moment to the object of "their grand concern, and dropping, at least, an incidental "intimation of the side to which they belong?"

My reader is no doubt well aware, and perhaps from experience, how hopeless an attempt it is to endeavour by argument, in company, to convert a person we casually meet with to our own opinions. Men's minds are rather heated than open to conviction in such short disputes. We may get enemies, but seldom gain friends by such conduct. Matter by this proposal, however,

is furnished for two or three paragraphs, and that was something for a book maker. If it be true, for example, that she had proof of the Curate of Blagdon's preaching, or arguing against the trinitarian doctrine, or the creed, by misnomer called Athanasian, for it is yet uncertain who the author is, the Saint of that name having had nothing to do in it, how comes it that she, if he were wrong, did not bring him over to her way of thinking; for she had three arguments in her favour, the politeness of men to the women, the right to the last word, and a pair of swift rolling black eyes, which is certainly something in a debate? Or, on the other hand, how happens it that he did not convert the lady to the church?—Just because few conversions of that hasty, sudden nature take place, and that men, on these occasions, argue rather for victory, than conviction and mutual edification. With such tempers, and particularly such a spirit as hers, for what purpose dispute about religion?

At her own house, I am informed, one of her sisters, when there are strangers, takes care to introduce a conversation on religion, and when the sentiments of the visitants are collected, one of the five generally withdraws, and notes them in a book kept for the purpose; and if they happen to differ from their views, particular care is taken to propagate that such a person is a Unitarian, such a person a Socinian, one an Arian, another not orthodox, and this frequently with a deliberate purpose to injure their characters. Whether the

Curate of Blagdon had ever dropped any expression that may be tortured into heterodoxy, I have not learned; but as she brought the charge, and being called on to substantiate it, there can be no doubt of its being a false and deliberately malicious charge. It is an indelible stain on her veracity.

As I am at liberty, if I think it proper, to give the name of my informant, vouching for this fact in his own person, whose veracity is unquestionable, let me from p. 56, vol. 8, transcribe a few lines, that the public may know this woman, who has passed herself so long as a candidate for canonization.

"People avoid conversation on religion as exposing themselves to the danger of playing with edged tools. They conceive of religion as something which involves controversy, and dispute; something either melancholy or mischievous; something of an inflammatory nature, which is to stir up ill humours and hatred; they consider it as a question which has two sides; as of a sort of party-business which sets friends at variance. So much is this notion adopted, that I have seen announced two works of considerable merit, in which it was stipulated as an attraction, that the subject of religion, as being likely to excite anger and party-distinctions, should be carefully excluded. Such is the worldly idea of the spirit of that religion, whose direct object it was to bring *peace and good will to men!*"

This is H. More.—If Mrs. More could not listen to the quotation of a text of scripture, without unjustly, illogically, as well as uncharitably, deducing the false conclusion of heterodoxy, and

considering the individual as a proper object of persecution and destruction, she who imagines herself, and wishes the world to regard her, as a person of extraordinary attainments, how could she recommend it to ladies in general, to make religion a principal subject of conversation, since many who do not think themselves the "best "thing of its kind," might stir up in the heat of debate ill-humours, mischief, strife, and hatred, of very serious consequence. It is by this artful conduct, however, that she has blazed abroad her reputation for piety and excellence so long, and it was by over-acting her character of cunning and mischief, she has ascended like a sky-rocket and exploded, and now sunk down to rise no more.

In one of the conversations just alluded to at her own house, where is that elegance of manners, that good breeding, which a writer on female education ought not only to know and recommend, but studiously in her own practice to observe? The gentleman expected to meet with a love of information, a desire to communicate knowledge; that affability which excites a collision of ideas, to promote mutual benefit or pleasure; that liberality and charity, which cheerfully allows for the varieties of sentiment and difference in opinion, when they occur, which must inevitably exist in individual minds; but he was disappointed, for H. More seemed rather to watch for some occasion of censure, of misrepresentation, to gratify the malicious pride of her mystical system, the existence of which he did not then know,

than " with meekness instruct, or receive a rea- " son of the hope" entertained by the person who bore his part in discourse.

On the subject of conversation, my author continues to direct ladies to talk to strangers on that subject they may be thought to be best acquainted with; to manage with discreet modesty the dangerous talent of wit; not to indulge humour, mimicry, imitation or buffoonery; to avoid the affectation of exclaiming that " they are thankful *they* " are not geniuses;" not to think themselves humble because they are not ingenious; and not to accuse themselves, from vanity, of faults from which they are known to be exempt. They are taught to speak little of themselves, or not at all, and not to publish their faults, rather than not be the subject of public talk; not to accuse themselves of all sins in the gross, that their friends may contradict them; and of all things, not to be foolishly angry if their friends should be so uncivil as to grant their charge against themselves, of being guilty of the infraction of the whole decalogue and more, with many other ramifications of the offspring of vanity. With great " seriousness" they are guarded against telling *stories*, even if they themselves had been *eye witnesses*, or even where their friend knew the man, who remembered the woman, who conversed with the person, who actually beheld the wonder, and never to divulge a secret. The writer on female education, can it be possible from the company she has kept, finds it necessary to warn the British ladies against

swearing, on account of its sinfulness and indecency.

" Among the deep, but less obvious mischiefs of conversation, *misrepresentation* must not be overlooked. " Self-love is continually at work, to give to all we say a " bias in our own favour. The counteraction of this fault " should be set about in the earliest stages of education. If " young persons have not been discouraged in the natural, " but evil, propensity to relate every dispute they have had " with others to their own advantage; if they have not " been trained to the bounden duty of doing justice even to " those with whom they are at variance; if they have not " been led to aim at a complete impartiality in their little " narratives, and instructed never to take advantage of the " absence of the other party, in order to make the story " lean to their own side more than the truth will admit; " how shall we in advanced life look for correct habits, " for unprejudiced representations, for fidelity, accuracy, " and unbiassed justice?

" Yet, how often in society, otherwise respectable, are " we pained with narrations in which prejudice warps, and " self-love blinds! How often do we see, that withholding " part of a truth answers the worst ends of a falsehood! " How often regret the unfair turn given to a cause, by " placing a sentiment in one point of view, which the " speaker had used in another! the letter of truth preserved " where its spirit is violated! a superstitious exactness scru- " pulously maintained in the underparts of a detail, in order " to impress such an idea of integrity as shall gain credit " for the *misrepresenter*, while he is designedly mistating " the leading principle. How may we observe a new cha- " racter given to a fact by a different look, tone, or em- " phasis, which alters it as much as words could have done! " the false impression of a sermon conveyed, when we do " not like the preacher, or when through him we wish to " make religion itself ridiculous! the care to avoid literal

" untruths, while the mischief is better effected by the un-
" fair quotation of a passage divested of its context; the
" bringing together detached portions of a subject, and
" making those parts ludicrous, when connected, which
" were serious in their distinct position! the insidious use
" made of a sentiment by representing it as the *opinion* of
" him who had only brought it forward in order to expose
" it! the relating opinions which had merely been put hy-
" pothetically, as if they were the avowed principles of him
" we would discredit! that subtle falsehood which is so
" made to incorporate with a certain quantity of truth,
" that the most skilful moral chemist cannot analyze or se-
" parate them! for a good *misrepresenter* knows that a
" successful lie must have a certain infusion of truth, or it
" will not go down. And this amalgamation is the test of
" his skill; as too *much* truth would defeat the end of his
" mischief; and too *little* would destroy the belief of the
" hearer. All that indefinable ambiguity and equivocation;
" all that prudent deceit, which is rather implied than ex-
" pressed; those more delicate artifices of the school of
" Loyola and of Chesterfield, which allow us when we
" dare not deny a truth, yet so to disguise and discolour it,
" that the truth we relate shall not resemble the truth we
" heard! These and all the thousand shades of simulation
" and dissimulation will be carefully guarded against in the
" conversation of vigilant christians."

Now, reader, recollect if you have read, and if not, immediately peruse the Blagdon controversy, when you will find all your virtuous feelings shocked at seeing the devil clothe himself as an angel of light, in the shape of a woman, with sparkling black eyes; see her here as an author, and there in her private practices! She literally practiseth all she here so well describes and for-

bids the British ladies. But she will "deceive "the nations" no longer.

"Some women indulge themselves in sharp raillery, un-"feeling wit, and cutting sarcasms, from the consciousness, "it is to be feared, that they are secure from the danger of "being called to account; this license of speech being en-"couraged by the very circumstance which ought to sup-"press it. To be severe, because they can be so with im-"punity, is a most ungenerous reason. It is taking a base "and dishonourable advantage of their sex, the weakness of "which, instead of tempting them to commit offences be-"cause they can commit them with safety, ought rather to "make them more scrupulously careful to avoid indiscre-"tions for which no reparation can be demanded. What "can be said for those who carelesly involve the injured "party in consequences from which they know themselves "are exempted, and whose very sense of their own security "leads them to be indifferent to the security of others?"

Alas! how easy it is to preach! how difficult to practice! H. More! thou art the woman! Recollect "private accusations" against more than one clergyman! How many clergymen have you described as heterodox, as Jacobins, &c.? And without the least provocation from some of them; and all this with the wicked purpose of ruining them. I have no doubt but you have frequently, since your late detections, revolved and recollected all the circumstances of your conduct to these individuals, some of whom despised, as I am well informed, to take any notice, on account of your sex, and for many other reasons, of your wicked behaviour; and I have no doubt your conscience has often upbraided you, and I have heard, that in soliloquy you have

apostrophized, " Verily I am guilty concerning " these brethren, and therefore is this evil now " come upon me."

Mrs. More recommends her pupils! the ladies of the British empire,

" Never gratify your own humour, by hazarding what " you suspect may wound any present in their persons, con- " nections, professions in life, or religious opinions; and do " not forget to examine whether the laugh your wit has " raised be never bought at this expence."

There are some clergymen whom H. More, with the deliberate purpose of injuring, has called Socinian in religion, and Jacobin in politics!.

The chapter on *Sensibility* (p. 106) I began with much expectation, not of edification indeed, but of pleasure and delight. I have, however, met with but cold common-place receipts for some of the fantastic, affected, nervous, vain, singular, hysterical oddities and peculiarities, of delirious or sick-minded women. Although she has furnished the ladies with a chapter on Definitions, she, however, does not even attempt to define the subject of the present chapter. Instead of her own mystical and cold-hearted philosophy, which but too often represents the amiable sensibilities of the sex as a foolish tenderness, she might have adopted the elegant one of Sterne. " Dear Sensi- " bility! Source of all that is precious in our joys, " or costly in our sorrows!" But Sterne she had already mentioned with disrespect. He was no mystical divine, his sermons are rational and possess more merit than many such works as hers.

Sterne will live; but H. More is dead. Besides Sterne, there were many other sources: it was sensibility paralysed the finger of the Indian on the banks of the Missippi, when his piece was levelled at Mr. Rotherham (pugg-puggy) so as that he could not pull the trigger for the destruction of a fellow creature; it was sensibility compelled the African damsel and her mother, when Mr. Park, wet and wearied, in a deluge of rain, sought shelter under a tree, to sing the improvisatore,

"Let us pity the *white* man under our tree, he has no "wife to grind him corn, no mother to bring him milk; "wet and weary, let us pity the white man."

And it was sensibility, when they saw a respectable and honest man, Mr. Bere, with an amiable companion, on the brink of degradation, about to be hurled, from credit and rank, to the most deplorable state of wretchedness and want, to which H. More and her friends and co-adjutors had devoted him, induced certain individuals to write in his favour, to administer the balm of consolation, to mingle their tears with theirs, when perhaps a tear, a good wish, or a prayer, was all some of them could bestow. But on whatever subject Mrs. More may be competent to write, she ought not to meddle with sensibility. She is too selfish to feel for another; the alms-deeds of her right are seen by her left hand; she casts her bread on the waters to take it up *immediately*; a trumpet always goes before her; and her tears, if she can shed any, like the crocodiles, have their reward in full view; for her maxim is, "Quis enim

virtutem amplectitur ipsam, præmia si tollas." Mrs. Yearsley was allowed no merit, unless she took a ticket from H. More; and Mrs. Cowley, Mr. Bere, and some others, must have their literary property, as well as their good name, filched from them, for no other reason than because they would not stoop to burn incense to her, nor besmear her talents with "oil of fool."

She, however, tells us that

"Ungoverned sensibility is apt to give a wrong direc-
"tion to its anxieties; and its affection often falls short of
"the true end of friendship. If the object of its regard
"happen to be sick, what enquiries! what prescriptions!
"Yet is this sensibility equally alive to the immortal inte-
"rests of the sufferer? Is it not silent and at ease when it
"contemplates the dearest friend persisting in opinions
"essentially dangerous; in practices unquestionably wrong?
"What a want of real sensibility, to feel for the pain, but
"not for the danger of those we love? Now see what sort
"of sensibility the Bible teaches! '*Thou shalt not hate*
"*thy brother in thine heart, but thou shalt in any wise*
"*rebuke him, and shalt not suffer sin upon him.*' But
let sensibility "figure to itself the bare possibility that the
"familiar friend is going down to the gates of death, un-
"repenting, unprepared, and yet unwarned!"

Let me here observe, what my, as well as my author's reader, must have long ago perceived, that this lady is sure to make a transition from every subject to a religious application. Of this I do not disapprove; but to have his religion always on his tongue, and to "spiritualize" every subject, looks somewhat suspicious. It serves here to put me in mind of 200l. a year, Mrs. Cowley, Mrs. Yearsley, bible plays and tragedies, the poem of

Sabrina, Mr. Jay's communion and quarrel, " pri-
" vate accusations," " he is a Socinian ;" " he is a
" Jacobin." But that I may for once discharge my duty, let me here exhort Mrs. H. More to be late and early at the throne of grace, and let her ask pardon of the individuals she has so irreparably injured, and implore forgiveness from God. Let her come candidly before the public, which she has abused, and make her apology for the strife she has artfully and wickedly fomented, and the divisions she perpetuates, by means, as mean and disgraceful, as they are sinful. Few sinners have more heinous sins to repent of than the list above enumerated ; they are in their own nature of a very black dye, and they are much aggravated by her attainments, and great profession of superior sanctity ; and as I am in duty bound, I will not cease to pray that God may open her eyes, while it is " the accepted time and day of salvation."

As instances of mistaken sensibility are quoted, observations made by open-hearted, indiscreet girls ; such as

" That warm friends must make warm enemies ;"—that " the generous love and hate with all their hearts ;"—that " a reformed rake makes the best husband ;"—that " there " is no medium in marriage, but that it is a state of exqui-
" site happiness or exquisite misery."

Against these injudicious and hastily received aphorisms of indiscreet young girls (for Mrs More herself took care to have more discretion than to believe these maxims) she warns her readers, and illustrates the success of these evil sayings on

young women, by the manner in which comedies in general end. Here the lady was at home; for as she wished to monopolize the education of the public to herself, it was necessary all women should be deterred from entering into the holy of holies, from going behind the scenes, attending the representation or reading of dramatic works, but herself. For all but herself, holy priestess, are in danger of being defiled thereby.

But however the author may act or think, I will prove my readiness to give her credit whenever I think she deserves it. I therefore transcribe the following short paragraph, p. 138, vol. 8, which, whatever the heart may be, discovers observation and judgment.

"When feeling stimulates only to self-indulgence; when "the more exquisite affections of sympathy and pity eva- "porate in sentiment, instead of flowing out in active cha- "rity, and affording assistance, protection, or consolation "to every species of distress within its reach; it is an evi- "dence that the feeling is of a spurious kind; and instead "of being nourished as an amiable tenderness, it should be "subdued as a fond and base self-love."

In p. 141, we meet the following passage, to which the public is indebted for that admirable poem, from the pen of a man of real genius, *Peter Pindar's Nil Admirari.*

"The poets again, who to do them justice, are always ready "to lend a helping hand when any mischief is to be done, "have contributed their full share towards confirming these "feminine follies: they have strengthened by adulatory "maxims, sung in seducing strains, those faults which "their talents and their influence should have been employed "in correcting."

She very justly made a charge against the poets without naming herself, as she was sensible she was a minor in the art; for her mischief is all in prose. She certainly has her share in corrupting the people, religiously and morally. She has made herself of some consequence in being noticed by Peter.

Page 149. The alteration in the fashion of visits *en masse* is ridiculed and lamented, on account of the total suppression of conversation which it occasions; and an opportunity is laid hold of to tell us that she was acquainted with and enjoyed the friendship of the late Bishop Horne, who particularly deplored the loss sustained in the mutual reciprocation of ideas, and the communion of kindred sympathies. Little instruction is here received by the observations of our author; for her sentences, like the objects she pursues, are frivolous, and the ideas, if they be at all comprehensible, are transient and nugatory. On the opportunities she has had of observing life and manners in her visits to London, and she professes herself studious of human character, she expresses herself with flippant wit and unsuccessful humour. A mixture of awkward humour, of wit that escapes before it is embodied with language, and of a mystical, unamiably described religion, characterize her strictures, not only on every moral subject, but on female education. A parallel is attempted between those ladies who ruin their husbands by play, and the few, the *raræ aves*, who, by giving

themselves up to study, shew an indifference towards their husbands, and neglect their children and household. The vanity and pedantry of a literary woman is remarked; and we are told, that she who is vain of her reading, would be foolishly vain of something else if she had read nothing. Considering Mrs. More's low origin, her real literary character as a "Miss Moon," who has borrowed from "kind lads," or stolen from Mrs. Cowley and Mrs. Yearsley, the disposition here censured, arrogant pride, is in no woman more disgusting than in herself. Affecting a superiority to Mrs. Cowley, to whom in no respect she was equal, and to Mrs. Yearsley, to whom she was superior, not in birth or genius, but only in the accidental circumstance of her father's teaching a charity school, from which she derived the advantage of a better education, she extends her presumption to the church, and exhibits her superciliousness to Mr. Bere, in the Blagdon dispute, whose father is known to have served his Majesty in the navy. But of this more hereafter.

Not to enumerate the public pleasures and amusements, the round of which she herself has patroled, there is no great policy, or any very high degree of religious purity, in a total renunciation of them. If she had declaimed against the perpetual pursuit, or the eternal continuity of them by individuals, all wise men would unite with her; but, I conceive, few men, who have intellect sufficient to comprehend the nature of religion and of good government, would think it

political to destroy the upper and lower rooms, pump-room, the public gardens, and the theatres, at Bath, London, and elsewhere. Surely she would spare the play-houses, of which she herself has been so much enamoured, since at the age of threescore and two, with all her piety, she has re-published *her own plays!* But what consistency can be expected from her non-descript principles, who has waged war with philosophy, the arts and sciences, and declares them hostile to christianity.

She puts me in mind of an old acquaintance, who travelled the country as a player, but with bad success. He at last, when he could not get bread by it, began to think, like H. More, that theatrical spectacles tended to corrupt the morals of the people, and conceived the idea, if not of writing, at least of speaking against the corruptions of the stage. Accordingly he dressed himself in sable, "was converted," became a "serious christian," and preached against the play-house! This is a fact.

Mrs. More and this gentleman are not the only instances of sinners becoming the apologists of virtue.

Mrs. More forgets that at public places the sexes form an acquaintance, and that afterwards they may see these ladies in the bosom of their own families.

Not only because it is in unison with my own taste, for Lady Mac and myself always disliked cards, but in justice to Mrs. More, and with a view to public utility, I transcribe a paragraph, p. 196.

"I forbear to descant on those serious and interesting "rites, for the more august and solemn celebration of which, "Fashion nightly convenes these splendid myriads to her "more sumptuous temples. Rites! which, when en- "gaged in with due devotion, absorb the whole soul, and "call every passion into exercise, except indeed those of "love, and peace, and kindness and gentleness. Inspiring "rites! which stimulate fear, rouse hope, kindle zeal, "quicken dulness, sharpen discernment, exercise memory, "inflame curiosity! Rites! in short, in the due per- "formance of which all the energies and attentions, all the "powers and abilities, all the abstraction and exertion, all "the diligence and devotedness, all the sacrifice of time, all "the contempt of ease, all the neglect of sleep, all the obli- "vion of care, all the risks of fortune: all these are con- "centrated to one point; a point in which the wise and "the weak, the learned and the ignorant, the fair and the "frightful, the sprightly and the dull, the rich and the poor, "the patrician and plebeian, meet in one common and uni- "form equality; an equality as religiously respected in "these solemnities, in which all distinctions are levelled at "a blow, as it is combated in all other instances."

Now whether Mrs. More's practice in the article of card playing gives the lie to her writing I cannot say, for I have but little knowledge of her personally, and my Lady has never seen her; I, therefore, am willing to give her credit in this respect. But alas! I do not advance far before I meet with cause to lament the infirmities of human nature, and the imbecility of female character. The abhorrence expressed by Peter, when he visited the household of Nero, and his indignation on the sight of the inhuman sports of the arena, are remarked; yet no disapprobation whatever is intimated of the conduct of the professors

of the true and reformed religion of Jesus fitting out large buildings of wood, loaded with men, arms and combustibles, to meet the christian subjects of his most Catholic Majesty, and of the late most Christian King, with eager desire for the glory of "sinking, burning, and destroying" each other; no, nor of the uncharitable practice of "sinking, burning and destroying," *to all eternity*, our very neighbours, if they happen to break their eggs on the wrong end, or choose not to repeat such a creed as we think proper to make. To promote war and desolation, she has published "many little cheap tracts;" but to encourage charity and peace, she has not spoken a word. Her character is not difficultly ascertained; she has written and acted too much not to be known as an accomplished hypocrite. If nations professing christianity, and persons affecting a purer system than their neighbours, hate each other, and fight battles, and carry on wars, as often, and as bloodily, as if they were heathens, what are we to think, but that either christianity, at least as they profess it, is not true, or that they are not of the right faith. Yet this is the character and practice of H. More!

In p. 227, there is a long note respecting Mr. Law's "*serious call to a devout and holy life*," which she strongly recommends to awaken sinners; "but," she adds, "even in this work Law is "not a *safe guide to evangelical light*." As a "preacher of repentance, Law has no superior; "as a preacher of salvation on scriptural grounds,

"*I would follow other guides.*" "What need "have we of further evidence" of her non-descriptism? Law's religion and doctrine, repentance, is defined and known; H. More's "*evan-*"*gelical light,*" "*other guides,*" is undefined, therefore not known. It is something mystical; it is not a "reasonable service." In perusing her works, the mind is led into a state of intellectual retrogradation, the more we read and hear of her non-descriptism, the less we know of it.

From p. 233 to 260 we have some useful practical preaching.

Approaching now (p. 272) the conclusion of her work, an *Analysis*, or rather a *Syllabus* of the "*Doctrines of Christianity,*" are laid before us; and this is done by giving an abridged account of the system, laying, as usual, its foundation in the "fall of man," and the consequent corruption of human nature.

The flimsy arguments in proof of human corruption, are the simplicity and credulity of children, the existence of law and lawyers, death and sickness, war, bars and bolts, bonds and securities, individual suspicion. From scripture her arguments are, "God saw the wickedness of man "was great, and that every imagination of the "thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." "God looked upon the earth, and behold it was "corrupt," &c. This before the flood; but of the Cosmogony and the Mythos, in the first chap. of Genesis, nor of the apple, has she made any mention. Since the flood, from David's complaints

and confessions of sins. In the gospel, from our Lord's reproof of Peter, "thou savourest not the "things that be of God, but those that be of *man*." "If ye were of the world, the world would love "his own; but I have chosen you out of the world, "therefore the world hateth you." "We know "that we are of God, and the world lieth in "wickedness." She says, "the heathen, to whom "he has not sent the light of the gospel, will *pro-* "*bably* not be judged by the gospel. But with "whatever mercy he may judge those who, living "in a land of darkness, are without knowledge "of his revealed law, *our* business is not with "them, but with ourselves."

Here she has conceded too much, and brought her fabric about her ears. That doctrine must be defended by an abler pen than hers, otherwise it will prove untenable. The horrors of the consequences of "her peculiarities" seem here to have struck her and she sinks down. Her views of christianity are not just.

From the epistles, however, more plausible texts are brought forward to maintain the doctrine of the fall and corruption. Those who wish to be satisfied on this subject, will consult the writings of the Unitarians, Socinians, and the Trinitarians. The doctrine of atonement is of course maintained, as well as that of *free grace*, and sectarian Antinomianism disavowed. The absolute necessity of a change of heart and life, and the influences of the Holy Spirit are insisted on, and I think not unscripturally; and some pains are taken to maintain the existence of the devil,

about whose destruction and banishment from this world, she declares herself much alarmed. But of that, I think, there is little danger, when so *notoriously holy* a person as herself encourages his practices and reign, by " inventing falsehoods ;" under the pretence of illness, confines herself to write, correct, instruct, and entreat all whom she can influence or move, to come forward, to " make " the Curate of Blagdon a liar ;" endeavours to ruin the reputation of others who have never provoked her, by publishing, with the cunning and artfulness of the black monarch himself, libels and calumnies. There is no danger, while " such excellent per- " sons" faithfully serve him, that his infernal majesty shall be dethroned or guillotined. H. More is a rara avis indeed ; and, notwithstanding her preaching, is one of his chief ministers, for he has servants of all denominations. I have heard of many authenticated facts, and which, were they not well authenticated, would be altogether incredible, considering the character she has assumed. They will, I am told, soon see the light. The clergy are exhorted to plead the cause of the devil, and not to forget or neglect any opportunity of bringing his name forward in their sermons. Her words are (p. 313)—

" May I, with great humility and respect, presume to " suggest to our divines that they would do well not to lend " their countenance to these modish curtailments of the " Christian faith ; nor to shun the introduction of this doc- " trine (the devil) whenever it consists with their subject " to bring it forward."

The published works, avowed by Mrs. More, and of which I have here given an account, end with a chapter on the "*Duty and Efficacy of Prayer*," of borrowed and transcribed excellence, and it concludes with the following petition:

"She earnestly implores that Being, who can make the "meanest of his creatures instrumental to his glory, to bless "this humble attempt to those for whom it was written, may "she, without presumption, entreat that this work of Chris-"tian Charity may be reciprocal, and that those who peruse "these pages may put up a petition for her, that in the great "day to which we are all hastening, she may not be found "to have suggested to others what she herself did not believe, "or to have recommended what she did not desire to prac-"tise? In that awful day of everlasting decision, may both "the reader and the writer be pardoned and accepted, '*not* "*for any work of righteousness which they have done*,' "but through the merits of the GREAT INTERCESSOR."

Upon this, I have only to remark, that during the two last years which I have passed at Bath, Bristol, and the neighbourhood, I have read every thing on the Blagdon controversy, of which I shall subjoin a cursory review; I have made enquiry into the facts, and *real* characters of the different parties, and with deep regret I lament, on account of the former credit and character of H. More, that that dispute had ever existed. Alas! alas! alas! "*The heart is deceitful above all things, and* "*desperately wicked: who can know it?*"

SHORT

REVIEW

OF

THE BLAGDON DISPUTE.

BY the consent of Mr. Bere, the Curate, and at the request of H. More, a Sunday school was established at Blagdon. The teacher, H. Young, agreeably to Mrs. More's avowed plan, did not confine himself to the instruction of children, but extended it to adults. Reading and writing were not only taught, but his lessons extended to preaching and prayer, in an extempore manner. Experiences were narrated, confessions heard, scriptures were expounded by ignorance, sudden and epileptical conversions had taken place, and many extravagancies practised, disgraceful to true religion, and offensive to decency. The individual temper also of the teacher is proved to have been that of a meddler in domestic and private affairs. Of these eccentricities information was given to Mrs. More, which she acknowledged in too imperious and consequential a manner. Here is Mrs. More's first fault. Eccentricities are continued and justified.

The Curate now communicates with his Rector, Dr. Crossman, who acts properly; and the schoolmaster is, by the Bishop, ordered to be dismissed. Sir A. Elton, with some non-descripts, come into the lady's ranks, and they rally their forces, and attempt a re-hearing. A day is fixed at Blagdon, where the Curate takes care to have a number of clergymen and very respectable gentlemen of the neighbourhood, to re-examine witnesses, whose integrity Sir A. and his protogée thought proper, but very indecently, to question. It was on the 12th of Nov. 1800, for ever memorable by the strange speech which Sir Abraham made to his witnesses—"This is not a court which can take "cognizance of perjury, nor can any one be called "to account for what he says here." Sir A. Elton has not denied this, though he has attempted to explain it away as "innocent when *decomposed*." This meeting decided in favour of the Curate, on which "secret accusations" are lodged with the Bishop and Dr. Crossman against him. The influence of some other Bishop is said to have been made use of to gain over Dr. Moss, the Chancellor, to "raise his father's arm against the unfor-"tunate Mr. Bere." The Rector is addressed by Mrs. More and some others, his virtue fails him, and he denies his Curate, as he would his master, under similar temptations. The Curate is dismissed by mandate, and the day of his departure fixed by notice given. He is then deserted by the body of his neighbours and brethren; some

of whom joined in secret accusations; but a certain number of virtuous characters, who know nothing of tergiversation, adhere to his cause, being that of the church, of established and public instruction, and from sympathy, friendship or abhorrence of injustice, to himself individually. Mr. Bere, finding his Rector and the Bishop inexorable, and his curacy, his living, and his gown about to be rent from him, and his name to be declared for ever infamous, publishes the whole correspondence, by the title of "Blagdon Contro-"versy." Sir A. Elton, who by visits to the gentry of the neighbourhood, and other means, had detached all he could from the interests of the Curate, promises, and at last publishes a Letter to Mr. Bere, in defence of H. More, whom, notwithstanding the meanness and wickedness of her "secret accusations," which she either durst not or could not, though challenged at the same time with the Bishop, substantiate, he exhibits on the pinnacle of human excellence. The true character of this performance, except the praises of his client, is, *that the more we read it the less we know of its object.*

Immediately was published a Letter, addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury, by the Rector of Chelvey, suggesting a plan of national education, to supersede the necessity for Sunday schools, and warning the country against the probable consequences of non-descript methodism. This book was well calculated to draw the public attention

towards Blagdon; and presently an Expostulatory Letter, in all the excellence of writing, ascribed to a man of rank and fortune, and another, from a man also of rank and excellence, were published, which at once gave celebrity to the dispute, and, in the end, re-instated the Curate, the license which was given to a disciple of the elect lady being recalled. A short time before this, Mr. Bere had published his Appeal to the Public, in answer to Sir Abraham, on which the Baronet and his book disappeared. Sir A. is returned, but the pamphlet is buried in oblivion.

The wickedness of the object proposed to themselves in this persecution of an innocent man, by Sir A. and H. More, only because he presumed to censure the conduct of the schoolmaster, is almost incredible. He was to be turned out of the curacy, then tried as denying the Trinity, and to be deprived of his living and stripped of his gown. They declared they had evidence sufficient for this proceeding; and if the public voice had not execrated their conduct, they would have accomplished their design.

Immediately on his re-instatement by Dr. Moss, dispatched to Bath from his father the Bishop, the signatures of nine clergymen were procured by the industry of Mrs. More and her party, who always work secretly and under ground, to contradict the Curate in some facts advanced; and defeated in her original and flagrantly wicked purpose, she now stoops to the mean drudgery of, by

private influence with her friends and acquaintances, to procure advertisements, with as many signatures as possible, to destroy the veracity of Mr. Bere, and to protract animosity in the neighbourhood, attended with the disgusting and shocking circumstances of men, who ought to be respectable, soliciting people to sign backwards and forwards in the same cause! All this while H. More, pretending to be ill, and reported by her friends to be dying, because she was ashamed, on the publication of Mr. Bere's Address to her, to come out and publicly shew herself, is busily engaged, with some help, in preparing "Animadversions on the Curate's Three Publica-"tions."

Of Mrs. More's "Animadversions" on the Curate's three books, I promised here to take some notice. That will be but short, and of its brevity my reader will have little reason to complain. The book was chiefly written by Hannah, here she is not altogether a "Miss Moon," and the other parts by a "damned poet." The mother of this book is a woman of imagination, but she imagines mischief, and fabricates and publishes falsehoods of really honest and good men, with the same moral non-chalance and contempt of the evangelical golden rule, with which she would conceive and bring forth a dramatic character in a play. The foster-father has also been sipping and even licking up some drops of the heavenly spring, which have been left as dregs in the cup

of the learned; but having no natural imagination, if all the paper in the King's printing-office were made into kites, it would not buoy him up one hundred yards the Parnassian hill. His paper-kite always comes down with him, and he breaks a leg or an arm, and is sure every time to "be "damned." The luckless wight must now try his hand at prose, in hopes of "working out his "salvation" among the non-descripts, and by a strange intellectual imbecility in what ought to be a work of facts, truths, demonstration and reasoning, he employs on prose more imagination than ever he could muster before, in the delineation of the characters of a "damned play." Reader! what beauty or comeliness, what natural graces can you suppose the offspring produced from the commerce of such minds to possess? In plain English, it is a farrago of falsehood throughout, unworthy of a more particular criticism, unnoticed by every liberal person, from which all turn away with disgust, delivered gratis to, but rejected by, the public, the production of the forlorn paroxysm of defeated malignity, and hostility to the church and rational religion, which has reduced H. More, and her party, to the disgraceful necessity of defending many falsehoods by many others. As she has thus succeeded in getting this minor poet, this praise-God-bare-bones, by madly making a work of argument and fact a work of fiction, and by so doing damn himself in prose, now "twice "damned;" it is not improbable but she may pre-

vail with Sir A. Elton, already damned in prose, to break out into poetry, that he also may be "damned in verse." So the devil always misleads his tools.

Instead of candidly acknowledging her error, as became a good, an ingenuous or great mind, or contriving some method of conciliation by the intervention of friends and neighbours; submitting the dispute to the arbitration of proper persons, as the only way to preserve any degree of reputation, she employs herself in tempting the Curate to lose sight of the main question, by involving him in personal contradictions with her disciples, or in meditating and executing some scheme of vengeance against those who had courage to despise her and Sir A's. system of terror, and with firmness defended the cause of the established church, in supporting the interests of the cruelly treated Mr. Bere. In all these paltry and detestable means, similar to her accusations against Mrs. Yearsley, she affects a consequential superiority, which only renders her contemptible, to which she is entitled neither by birth, merit, excellence, or rank in society. In God's name, who is H. More, who arrogates so much, takes the liberty to insult, to injure, and retires into her room, and dares not or cannot vindicate her conduct? She is the daughter of J. More, first a menial servant to Mr. Berkeley, then a teacher of a charity school, at 25l. a year; then herself and sisters keep a school, which they open on the produce of a subscription; then

a play-wright, &c. &c. &c. But all this is no disgrace to Mrs. More, more than it would have been to Mr. Bere to have been (if what she says were true) the son of a publican. It is the malicious disposition of her heart to calumniate, to injure and ruin others, under a robe of religious sanctity, that disgraceth her. Her genealogy is a fact in biography proper to be recorded, but would not have been repeated in this page, had it not been for the foolish, mean, malevolent purpose, with which in her and the "damned "poet's" "Animadversions," she laid a false account of Mr. Bere before the public, as I am well assured. Malevolence rankles in her heart. I weep for her. She is incurable. She did triumph over poor Mrs. Yearsley, and hoped for a victory over the church; but she has been defeated with irremediable disgrace, and, therefore, she and her sorry defenders are now become desperate. It is very remarkable, that there has not yet been any thing published on her side, excellent in argument, or decent of temper.

Respecting the true character of H. More, the world, till lately, has been ignorant. In the course of my remarks on her writings, or writings ascribed to her, I have had occasion at times to notice the complexion of her heart, as well as her literary talents. Let me then, here, briefly re-capitulate her character as a writer, and as a woman.

By great application, much reading, and observation on life and manners, she has acquired literary abilities to cast the sentiments she culls here and there into verse; but there is no poetry. In prose she writes mechanically, and where she has conceived, brings forth decently, and "*as* "*well as can be expected;*" but her births are frequently without conception, and her pages, therefore, often impalpable inanity. Her sacred novels are not her worst productions. She has abilities, but no genius.

As a woman, her chief virtue is prudence and cunning; she is charitable, i. e. gives away small gifts, the property oftener of others than her own, and thus has the credit of extensive charity. With strangers she talks but little, unless she thinks it her interest to be loquacious. She is moderate in eating and drinking; and rather regular as to her time of going to rest and rising. She has acquired a very soft, whispering, insinuating manner of speaking. She can be pleasant, although she hates you; and profess kindness, attachment, and friendship, without meaning any thing by it. She is impatient of, and never forgives contradiction; and, if possible, will remove any obstacle to the accomplishment of her purpose; and if she can evade the law, or public censure, is not scrupulous about the means. When offended, she knows no forgiveness, and every thing must submit to the violence and implacability of her temper. She works, however,

as not to be easily discovered to be of this temper. She can preach extempore, and, like Hester Wilmot, pray without book or pre-meditation; and can invent and propagate falsehoods, hate and calumniate, with seldom a possibility of detection.

In her religion all the graces and virtues of the gospel are put in requisition, yet these are not enough. Her religion is *this, that;* and it is neither *this* nor *that.* There is a mixture of mysticism, insidiousness, and paradox in her doctrines, but ill explained, which excites a doubt respecting her principles, and renders the existence of her religion very questionable. She refines and abstracts, without any rational philosophy, so much as to run in a circle. She would have us be "serious," neither laugh, dance nor sing, and, it is supposed, like Lackington's virgin after marriage, so "pure" as to refuse her husband marital rights and rites. Salvation is limited to those only of her way of thinking; and she believes all who do not agree with her to "perish everlastingly." Her benevolence and charity are confined to a sect; she is ignorant of that spirit that Jesus displayed in his conversation with the woman of Samaria; and is constantly keeping alive the invidious distinction of Jew and Samaritan. To apply the term panacea to the words "genuine "piety," perpetually dropping from her mouth and pen, is indeed an appropriate epithet; but she vends it too cheaply as a nostrum, without

proving its having, alas! cured any disease of her own heart. All that the theology of her cast seems to have done for her, is, to make her more cunning, artful, temporizing, and ostenstatiously pious, than her neighbours.

In politics, from the hope of reward, or a want of fortitude to vindicate a righteous cause, she uniformly approves of the minister of the day, and whatever she may think, declares no opposite opinion. If virtue and religion were in a mean habit, or in discredit with the great, she would deny both; for without their notice, and some smiles from them, she cannot exist.

"Way for my Lord; Virtue stand by and bow."

Although to superiors she is fawning, and to inferiors tyrannical, to promote her schemes she can associate, eat and drink, and converse with the meanest of the mean, and indefatigably labour to puritanize their minds. If she were thirty years younger, I have no doubt but she might live to see two thirds of the nation non-descripts, calling out and voting for the abolition of a liturgy in the churches. It was the extempore praying lecturers who began the mischief in the time of Charles the first, and arrogated to themselves exclusive holiness. I have conversed with some of the modern non-descripts, since I have begun to write this critique, and they tell me it is impossible to be saved but by believing as they do. They dismiss Curates who do not unite in their scheme; they refuse their pulpits to the regular Clergy. "The plague is begun."

Dissenters I would tolerate and cherish as the establishment; but I would not create more.—To puritanize is to revolutionize the people, and to revolutionize is to confound all order, subordination, religion, and regular government. He, or she, therefore, that puritanizeth, "does not "deserve well of his or her country."

THE END.

APPENDIX.

TO prove the literary larceny committed by H. More, and her uniform practice of calumny, alluded to in this work, the following extracts are made from Mrs. Yearsley's NARRATIVE to the Public, in 1787.

"But should be obliged to her if she would return my "manuscript copies."

"Miss More replied, 'They are left at the printers, "Mrs. Yearsley—Don't think I shall make any use of "them. They are burnt.' 'Burnt!!' said I!! She "seemed confused—My heart felt for her;—those short "pauses convinced me that she was hurt, and from that "consideration I was silent; but am still concerned that "she would not return those poems which are not pub-"lished." Page 20.

In a note Mrs. Yearsley says, dignifying H. More with the title of Stella—

"Stella wrote to London, that I dashed the money in "her face, and that I was otherwise very violent. I de-"clare those charges to be totally without foundation: the "money lay on the table, but was not touched by me.

"Motives the most powerful and natural that can possess "the female breast, urged me to require a copy of the deed; "nor can I now at this present period repent the requisi-"tion, though it has been attended with so much calumny

" and *so many false representations.* My character, " which in one moment appeared so bright, and in the next " tinged with every vice that can disgrace the sex, excited " many gentlemen and ladies to visit me. To these I sim- " ply rehearsed the real fact, and produced the copy of the " deed. None could justify it:—but I am particularly in- " debted to Mr. Shiels, for his generous and disinterested " friendship. On reading the copy, that worthy gentle- " man wrote to Miss H. More; but received no answer. " Instead of answering his letter, the ingenuous Stella " wrote to a lady in London, desiring her letter might be " read to Mr. Shiels. It was, and contained all those false " charges on my character which I have here mentioned. " Mr. S. immediately wrote to Miss More, desiring he " might be allowed a copy of this scurrilous letter; but he " received no answer." P. 21.

" Shielded by popular opinion, the ungenerous H. M. " aims at a defenceles breast—Her arrows are of the most " malignant kind—Yet her endeavours to crush an insigni- " ficant wretch need not be so amazingly strenuous; for I " should have sunk into obscurity again had not my repu- " tation been so cruelly wounded.—I have to lament, that " it does not require one short hour for this expeditious lady " to make her wonderful transit from the zenith of praise " to the centre of malicious detraction. For all the per- " fection, fame, or virtues, she can boast of possessing, I " *would not be so much a Proteus!*" P. 24.

Emery and Adams, Printers, High-Street, Bristol.